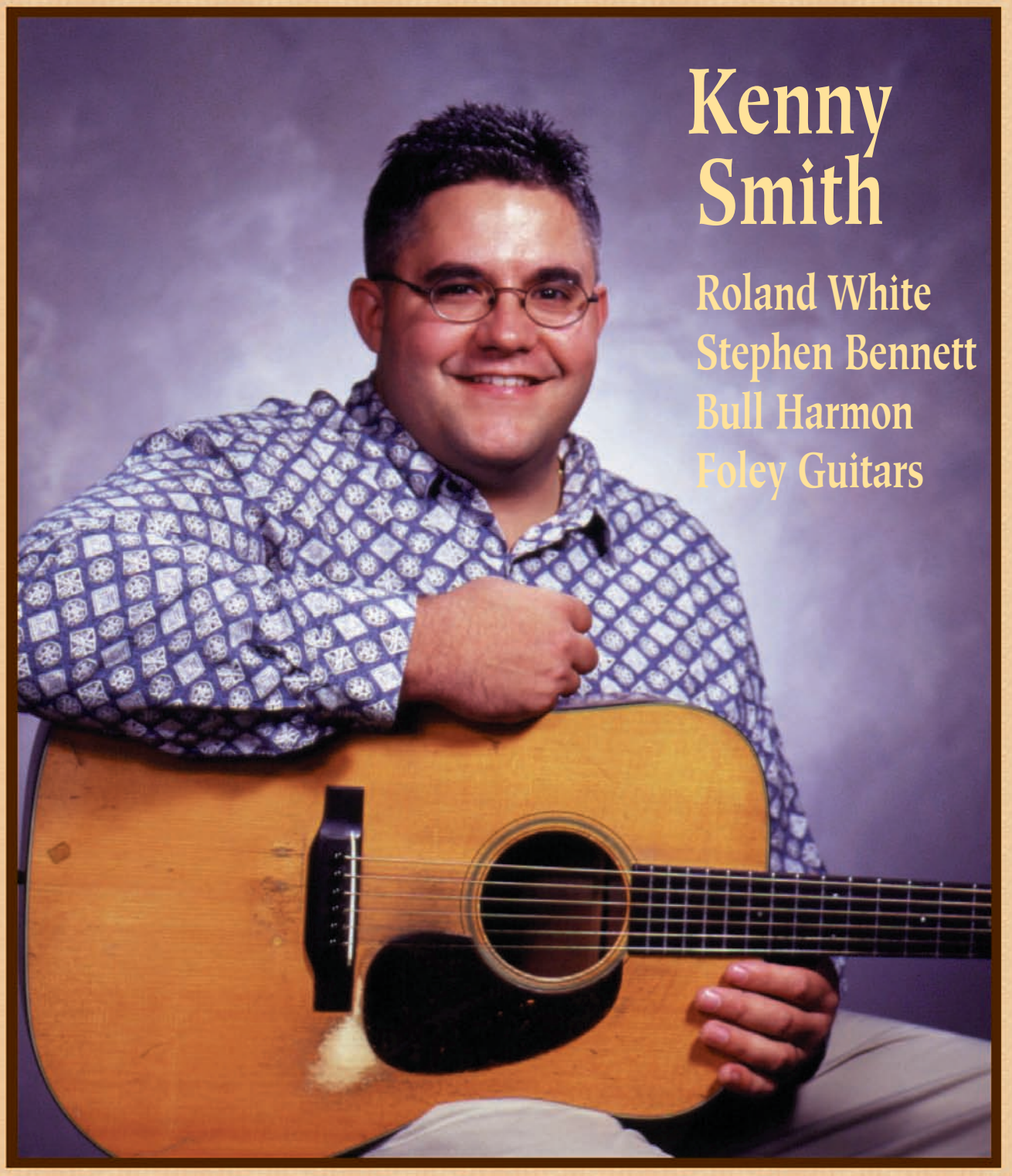
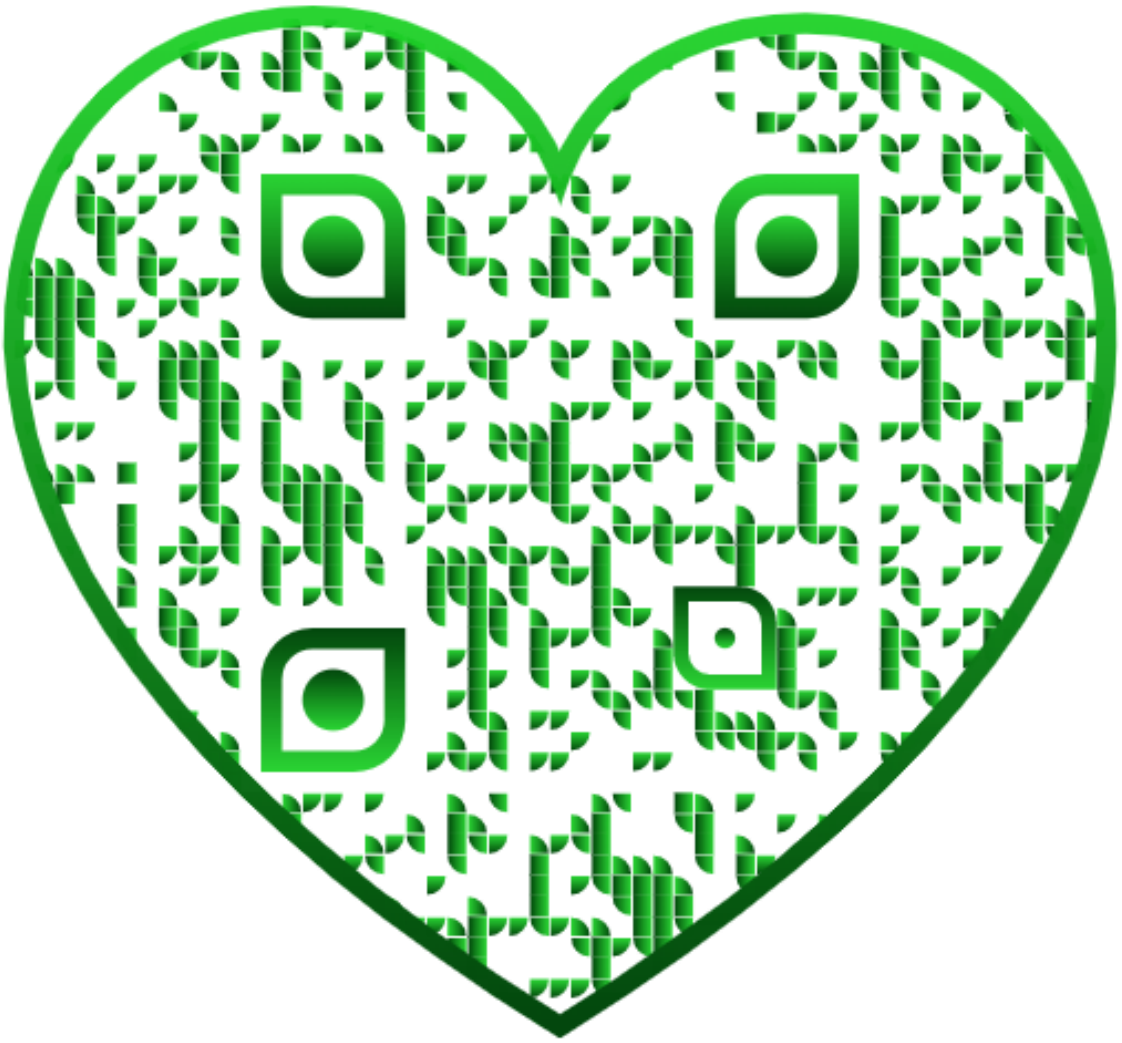
$4.00

Flatpicking Guitar Magazine

Volume 4, Number 3 March/April 2000





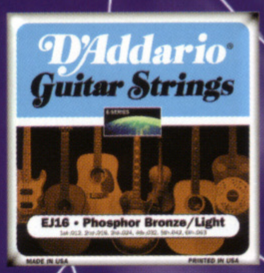
Better by Design

Pioneering innovative string design has been a D'Addario family tradition for nine generations. Most guitar players don't realize that the inner core wire in ALL D'Addario steel strings is made from carefully drawn, hexagonally shaped, high carbon steel wire. The six "edges" of the core wire bite into the softer wrap wire, securing it all along its length.

The hexagon core is just one of the reasons D'Addario strings are "Better by Design."

Hexagonally shaped high carbon steel core wire.

Core wire edges dig in to the wrap wire to insure a tight bond between the core and the wrap wire.



the Player's Choice

PO Box 290 • Farmingdale, NY 11735 USA • E-mail: strings@daddario.com • www.daddario.com

D'Addario

Flatpicking Guitar Magazine

Volume 4, Number 3

March/April 2000

Published bi-monthly by:
High View Publications
P.O. Box 2160
Pulaski, VA 24301

Phone: (540) 980-0338
Fax: (540) 980-0557
Orders: (800) 413-8296
E-mail: highview@flatpick.com
Web Site: http://www.flatpick.com
ISSN: 1089-9855

Dan Miller - Publisher and Editor
Mariann Miller - Sales and Advertising
Connie Miller - Administration
Contributing Editors:
Dave McCarty
Bryan Kimsey
Cover Scan - Jason Hungate

Subscription Rate ($US):
US $22.00
Canada/Mexico $30.00
Other Foreign $37.00

All contents Copyright © 2000 by High View Publications unless otherwise indicated
Reproduction of material appearing in the *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine* is forbidden without written permission

Printed in the USA

IBMA International Bluegrass Music Association MEMBER

CONTENTS

FEATURES

Kenny Smith 4
Flatpick Profile: Stephen Bennett 18
Jam Tunes: "Beaumont Rag" 36
Foley Guitars 38
Masters of Rhythm Guitar: Roland White 50
Guitar Highlight: Merrill C-28 76

COLUMNS

Norwegian Wood 12
Craig Vance
Beginner's Page: Perfect Pitch 14
Dan Huckabee
Flatpicking Rhythm: Rodney Dillard 15
Joe Carr
Flatpicking & Folk/Acoustic Rock 24
John Tindel
Kaufman's Corner: "Jesse Polka" 28
Steve Kaufman
Nashville Flat Top: "Lonesome Pie" 32
Brad Davis
Break Time: "Lonesome Road Blues" 34
Chris Jones
The O-Zone: "Shenadoah Falls" 41
Orrin Star
Cajun Flatpicking: "Jole Blonde" 43
Dix Bruce
Music Theory: Mastering the Fingerboard 46
Mike Maddux
Gospel Guitar: "Blessed Assurance" 53
Harold Streeter
Flatpicking Fiddle Tunes: "Madam Bonaparte" 59
Adam Granger
Exploring Bluegrass Guitar: "Yellow Rose of Texas" 61
Steve Pottier
Eclectic Acoustic: "Maids of Castlebar" 63
John McGann

DEPARTMENTS

New Release Highlight: Bull Harman 67
Reviews 70

Cover Photo by Lyn Adkins

How to Duplicate & Promote an Acoustic CD Release

1. **Send your music to radio.** No matter how you define your goals, you need to get your music to folk radio. One excellent way to do this is through a **radio-oriented sampler CD program**, such as the OASISACOUSTIC™ sampler CDs, which get the music of Oasis clients to hundreds of key radio stations throughout the U.S.

2. **Find distribution.** When people hear your music on the radio and want to buy the CD, will they be able to find it? If you make your CD with Oasis, they will. Here's why: Oasis clients automatically qualify for national distribution through Valley Media, the nation's largest full-line distributor. This means your CD is automatically available at all of the biggest Internet music stores: CDnow, Amazon.com, Music Boulevard, TotalE.com, etc. Your CD is also available for special-order distribution in all the big retail chains: Borders, Camelot, etc.

3. **Think "retail-friendly" when packaging your CD.** Your CD needs to look as good as it sounds. While jewel-box packaging is still very popular, as an alternative you may want to consider eye-catching **cardboard substitutes for the jewel box.** such as the patented **Oasis Jewel-Free™ Box**.

4. **Work with a reputable duplication company:**

• **Ask for references.** Who are the company's clients? Do they include artists and labels you respect? (Oasis is proud of our work, for example, with Trout Fishing in America, David Wilcox, Trapezoid, Chris Smither, Brooks Williams, Steven King, Salamander Crossing...)

• **Do they understand your music and your market?** If you're going to Kerrville for the first time, do they understand what this means? If your guitar sounds too tinny, do they know how to fix it? Nerissa Nields (The Nields) says "We love dealing with a company that knows and cares who we are. Oasis is fantastic; they manufactured our CDs in time to make sure we had them for our CD release at the Iron Horse. And the quality is superb."

[:OASIS®:]
CD & CASSETTE DUPLICATION

Call toll-free:
(888)296-2747 (888-BY OASIS)
send us e-mail at info@oasisCD.com,
or check out our web site, www.oasisCD.com
(selected as a Luckman's Best of the Web® site).

EDITOR'S PAGE

Kenny Smith Issue

We are proud to have Kenny Smith, two time IBMA "Guitar Player of the Year," on the cover of this issue. The Kenny Smith cover is timely for a few other reasons. AcuTab Publications recently released a great transcription book with transcriptions from Kenny's solo project *Studebaker*, and the two Lonesome River Band CDs Kenny has played on. Additionally, Kenny and Tim Stafford played on a new Rebel recording called *Knee Deep In Bluegrass*. This record features almost all of the musicians who have been the subject of AcuTab transcription books in the past. That project is due out in May. The tab we feature in this issue, "Angeline the Baker," was transcribed from that project.

Audio CD

I want to thank everyone who has sent in their comments and suggestions regarding the audio CD that we are now presenting as a companion to each issue of the magazine. With this issue, our fourth with an audio companion, we finally worked out the mail service bugs and are shipping the CD packaged along with the magazine. Those who subscribe to the audio CD probably noticed the improvements in packaging that we were able to make with the last issue. We will continue to try and improve the quality of this product. Reader response and support is what makes it possible. Thanks everyone!

New Columns

Since we started publishing this magazine, we have always received many helpful comments and suggestions from readers regarding the content. We have tried our best to change and adapt to suit the suggestions of the readers. With the addition of the "Gospel Guitar" column in the last issue, we have had to increase the number of pages in the magazine (it used to be 76, now it is 80) and we still cannot fit everything in that we would like to fit in. In the last issue John Tindel sat out due to scheduling. In this issue Frank Ford is sitting out due to lack of space. For those of you who are fans of his column, he will be back next time.

We are also trying to rotate a few other new columns in to the mix in the near future, most notably a "Gypsy Jazz" column. Keep those comments and suggestions coming!

Tony Rice

The Video Collection

This video presents Tony at the 1992 Merle Watson Festival with Ricky Skaggs, Sam Bush, Mark O'Connor, Jerry Douglas and others.

Titles include : TONY RICE ALL STAR JAM Red Haired Boy, Blue Railroad Train, I Wonder Where You Are Tonight, White House Blues • TONY RICE & FRIENDS The Old Home Place, Bluegrass Breakdown • TONY RICE UNIT Dusty Miller, He Rode All The Way To Texas, Salt Creek, Another Lonesome Day, Nine Pound Hammer, Darcy Farrow, Crazy Creek, Little Sadie and Shadows

Vestapol 13058 $24.95

Norman & Nancy Blake

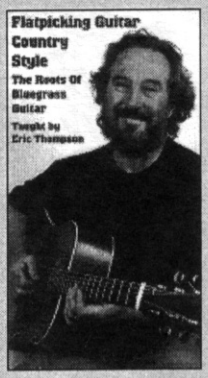
Titles include: OHIO, 1980 Medley: Randall Collins & Done Gone, Medley: Green Leaf Fancy, Da Slockit Light, Briar Picker Brown & Stoney Fork • ALABAMA, 1984 Gray Coat Soldiers • Medley: Knockbauer Polka #1 & #2 & The El Paso Waltz • Medley: Within A Mile, The Durham Rangers, Far From Home, Primrose Last • SOUTH CAROLINA, 1988 Jordan Am A Hard Road To Travel, Prettiest Little Girl In The County, The Little Stream Of Whiskey • IOWA, 1995 • Hangin' Dog, Battleship Of Maine Medley: The Kitchen Girl & Cattle In The Cane, Democratic Donkey Is In His Stall Again ***Vestapol 13059 $24.95***

New Instructional Videos from Eric Thompson

Flatpicking Guitar Country Style

The Roots of Bluegrass Guitar

Taught by Eric Thompson



Eric Thompson will have you flatpicking lead breaks in styles from Maybelle Carter to Doc Watson. You'll learn to pick out the melody to songs like *East Virginia Blues, Sad and Lonesome Day* and *Shady Grove.* You will learn to embellish your playing with "hammer-ons" and "pull-offs" for the real old-time country sound. You'll build a solid technique, advancing step-by-step through single note arrangements of *Thompson's Rag,* fiddle hoedowns *Arkansas Traveler* and *Soldier's Joy,* and a bluesy bluegrass break for *Good Old Mountain Dew* (employing slippery slides and hot runs). Eric's invaluable tips on left hand fingering and right hand pick technique are clearly illustrated in split-screen close-ups.

GW 601 $29.95

Flatpicking Fiddle Tunes

Reels, Rags & Hoedowns

Taught by Eric Thompson

Old-time fiddle tunes are the bedrock upon which acoustic guitar flatpicking is built. Eric Thompson's strong, melodic picking has set a benchmark for taste and tone for nearly four decades. In this video Eric shares soulful arrangements of seven of his favorites, guiding you slowly, line-by-line through classics like *Texas Gals, Fish In The Millpond,* Scottish-Irish rooted *Miller's Reel* and *Stony Point,* mountain modal *Falls of Richmond,* swingin' *Kennedy Rag* and the bouncy *East Tennessee Blues.* You'll build your repertoire and hone your technique, exploring fingering patterns in six different keys which are all clearly illustrated in split-screen close-ups. ***GW 602 $29.95***

Bluegrass Crosspicking Guitar

Taught by Eric Thompson

Crosspicking is an exciting flatpicking technique that is an essential part of every bluegrass guitarist's arsenal. Utilizing repeated patterns on three-string groups, crosspicking captures the bounce of a fiddler's double shuffle and the drive of three-finger banjo Scruggs-style rolls. Eric Thompson lays it out for you in easy to understand steps, illustrating the basic patterns with arrangements of *Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss, Blackberry Rag, Beaumont Rag, Wildwood Flower,* and *Cross-eyed Fiddler.* Split-screen close-ups let you see exactly what and how Eric is playing. ***GW 603 $29.95***

Doc Watson & David Grisman

In Concert

In this unique video Doc and David with their friend Jack Lawrence present their unique blend of country, jazz, bluegrass and folk-music.

Titles include: Bye Bye Blues, Shady Grove, Summertime, Sweet Georgia Brown, Hobo Bill's Last Ride, In The Pines. Long Journey Home, Lonesome Moonlight Waltz, EMD, I Don't Love Nobody, Blue Eyed Jane, Kentucky Waltz, Will You Be Loving Another Man, Deep River Blues, Soldier's Joy, Medley: Big Sandy/Salt Creek, Roll In My Sweet Baby's Arms and Roll On Buddy. ***Vestapol 13082 $24.95***

Legends Of Flatpicking Guitar

featuring Doc Watson, Tony Rice, Norman Blake & Dan Crary

Titles include: DOC WATSON & JACK LAWRENCE Black Mountain Rag, Peach Pickin' Time Down In Georgia TONY RICE ALL STAR JAM Nine Pound Hammer, Cold On The Shoulder, Whitewater NORMAN BLAKE & THE RISING FAWN STRING ENSEMBLE Jimmy Brown The Newsboy, Salty, Molly Bloom • DAN CRARY Country Boy Rock N' Roll, Medley: The Fishing Creek Blues/ The Blackbird/Turkey In The Straw/ Bonaparte's Retreat/Arkansas Traveller DOC WATSON & JACK LAWRENCE Bye Bye Blues, Tennessee Stud TONY RICE & RICKY SKAGGS Where The Soul Of Man Never Dies, More Pretty Girls Then One • NORMAN BLAKE & THE RISING FAWN STRING ENSEMBLE Nashville Blues, Medley: The Cuckoo's Nest/Over The Waterfall/Opera Reel/Cherokee Shuffle • TONY RICE ALL STAR Jam Freeborn Man • DOC & MERLE WATSON Medley:Sheeps In The Meadow/ Stoney Fork, Medley: Bill Cheatham/Salt Creek DAN CRARY Lady's Fancy, Black Mountain Rag. ***Vestapol 13005 $24.95***

Doc Watson

Rare Performances 1963-1981

Titles include: Deep River Blues, Nine Pound Hammer, Daniel Prayed, St. James Hospital, Shady Grove, Black Mountain Rag, Stack O' Lee Blues, Tom Dooley, Southbound, Way Downtown, Lonesome Road, Medley: Nancy Roland/Salt Creek, I Wish I Was A Mole In The Ground, Sweet Georgia Brown, Peach Pickin' Time Down In Georgia, Will The Circle Be Unbroken, Raincrow Bill, Tennessee Stud, Medley: Big Sandy/Bill Cheatham, A Roving On A Winters Night and Black Mountain Rag.

Vestapol 13023 $24.95

Doc Watson

Rare Performances 1982-1993

Titles include: New River Train, Shady Grove, Going To Chicago, Blue Yodel No. 12, Sleep Baby Sleep, You Must Come In At The Door, Dear Old Sunny South By The Sea, Amazing Grace, Foggy Mountain Top, What Is A Home Without Love, Nine Pound Hammer, Riding On That Midnight Train, Fire Ball Mail, Shake Rattle & Roll, Make Me Pallet, In The Jailhouse Now, Going To Chicago & Life Gets Tee-jus. ***Vestapol 13024 $24.95***

Doc's Guitar Jam

Featuring Doc Watson, Tony Rice, Dan Crary, Jack Lawrence and Steve Kaufman.

Titles include: DOC WATSON, TONY RICE, DAN CRARY, STEVE KAUFMAN & JACK LAWRENCE Ragtime Annie, Blue Ridge Mountain Blues, St. Anne's Reel, More Pretty Girls Then One, Walk On By, Little Sadie, Black Mountain Rag, Lime Rock, Billy In The Lowground Going Down This Road Feeling Bad • DOC & FRIENDS What Does The Deep Sea Say, Ramshackle Shack DOC WITH TONY RICE, STEVE KAUFMAN, JACK LAWRENCE & T. MICHAEL COLEMAN Wildwood Flower.

Vestapol 13055 $24.95

SPECIAL OFFER (Valid until Aug.1st, 2000): Buy any three videos and take a fourth FREE. Postage/handling FREE with this offer.
(Free video must be lower or equal to the lowest priced video purchased)

Make checks payable to Stefan Grossman's Guitar Workshop, Inc. • Visa/Mastercard Orders Accepted • Write for our FREE catalog.
EUROPE/AUSTRALIA: All videos are available in PAL format from our English office. For information regarding prices, write:
P.O. Box 262, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 3ZP, England Tel: 01732/353 252 Fax: 01732/362 418
For Dealer inquiries in the U.S. and Canada call Mel Bay Publications at 800-8-Mel Bay

Stefan Grossman's Guitar Workshop, Inc.
P. O. Box 802, Sparta, NJ 07871 Tel: 973/729 5544 Fax: 973/726 0568
Visit our web site at http://www.guitarvideos.com

Kenny Smith

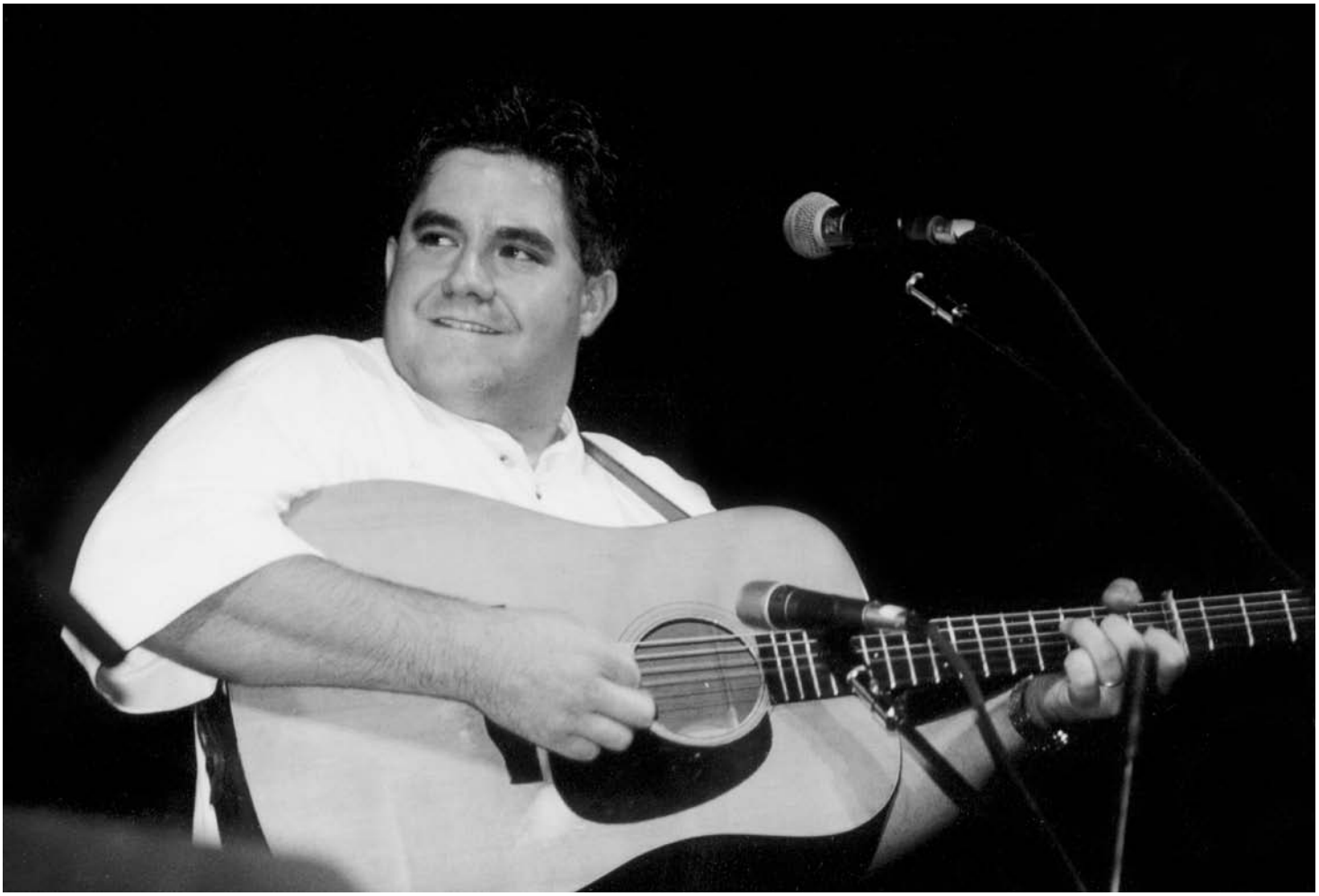


Photo: Patty Lindley

Taking Flatpicking Into The 21st Century

by David McCarty

Kenny Smith certainly enjoyed the last year of the 1900s, and it had nothing to do with the fact that the much-vaunted Y2K bug failed to bring computerized civilization to its knees. 1999 saw the 32-year-old Indiana native win his second straight Guitarist of the Year award from the International Bluegrass Music Association. His band, the Lonesome River Band, continued its streak as one of the hottest, most influential groups in bluegrass and they've just finished a new album which Kenny says is his favorite album with the bluegrass supergroup. Kenny and his wife Amanda started work on a joint gospel project, and he's planning to record a follow-up to his outstanding debut album, *Studebaker*. Reflecting his growing stature as one of the flatpicking guitarists who will redefine his instrument in the coming years, AcuTab Publications released the first volume of transcriptions of Kenny's ground breaking solos from the LRB and his brilliant 1997 solo release, *Studebaker*. And he moved into a new home he and his talented wife, Amanda, are renting in the tiny mountain burg of Vesta, Virginia. In the basement, Kenny has a workshop where he does guitar repair and other woodworking projects.

But the most important project he's had in recent years has been his own guitar playing. Always a restless, inventive creator on guitar, Kenny Smith has opened amazing new horizons on the instrument by refusing to be limited to playing guitar within the confines of traditional "position" playing. Instead, he's taking concepts from many other guitar sources to create a fresh, innovative new approach to flatpicking that is as revolutionary in its own way as the work of earlier flatpicking pioneers such as Clarence White and Tony Rice. A student of everything from the rock guitar stylings of Eddie Van Halen to the brilliant fingerstyle work of guitarists like Jerry Reed and Merle Travis, Kenny's trademark sound is built around a fluid style incorporating frequent open notes even when he's playing licks in the fingerboard's upper registers. The result is a technical and musical breakthrough allowing Kenny

to utilize the instrument's entire tonal range at any given moment. It's a sound never before heard in flatpicking; one that will influence guitarists far into the next millennium.

Born far from the hotbed of bluegrass in Ft. Wayne, Indiana on Sept. 19, 1967, Kenny heard music played around his house right from the start. Both his dad and grandfather played fiddle, and in addition to playing with many local groups Kenny's dad made sure his family got to travel to local festivals and hear bluegrass music live whenever possible. Kenny's introduction to guitar now seems preordained. "We had a guitar around house. My dad had built it for a cousin and had that in a closet," Kenny recalled. "He told us never to bother it, but of course I would go in and try to strum it. Dad came home early one day and caught me playing it. Rather than whipping me, he taught me G, C, and D chord. He came home the next day, and I had those chords down. So I got a guitar that Christmas, when I was four. I still remember taking my guitar in for kindergarten and playing for the kids in my class."

By the age of seven, one of his dad's band members taught Kenny to play "Cripple Creek," urging him to make use of his little finger on his left hand as much as possible to increase his speed and fluidity, a lesson the young musician certainly took as gospel. During the 1970s, Kenny started backing up his brother and other musicians in the few banjo and fiddle contests available in Indiana at the time; there simply weren't any guitar contests held in the area for the young flatpicker to enter. Still, he picked up numerous fiddle tunes and bluegrass standards during this period, and began to seriously study the great flatpickers.

One player who influenced Kenny tremendously early on was Norman Blake, whom he saw perform on a PBS television special. At Kenny's urging, his father ordered Blake's classic *Old and New* album from Elderly Instruments. Kenny studied that album thoroughly, patiently working out Blake's licks and breaks. He also discovered the classic 1975 "J.D. Crowe and the New South" album on Rounder featuring Tony Rice, Ricky Skaggs and Bobby Hicks at the local library. "I had that album out for about three months," he says. "I just loved that sound." Rice's buoyant, jazz horn-influenced guitar tone, of course, grabbed young Kenny's ear right away. "The first thing I noticed was how clean and explosive it was. It was one of those things that was neat on acoustic guitar, and it was different for me."

By the time he was in high school, Kenny's love affair with guitar drew him to almost any sort of guitar-oriented music he could find. Since there wasn't much bluegrass in northeastern Indiana, he gravitated to rock guitar as an outlet where he could play guitar with friends and earn a little money playing gigs. "Basically the rock scene was an outlet for guitar. A friend had some Van Halen albums, and I got into that more as a challenge than anything. I played that all through high school," Kenny said. "It did help me in playing without a capo; that opened me up, especially in playing up the neck."

Kenny says Eddie Van Halen's approach to playing melodically over the entire neck (rather than the rock guitar norm of playing "box" or pattern licks in one position) greatly influenced his acoustic guitar playing as he went back into bluegrass. In high school, he also took the time to study a little classical guitar using a couple of guitar instruction books from the library. Again, the classical approach to developing melodic lines encompassing open strings over the entire guitar fingerboard helped greatly expand Kenny's technical understanding of the instrument and opened possibilities in his flatpicking other bluegrass-oriented flatpickers hadn't considered.

But once high school was over, Kenny's experimentation with electric guitar faded as quickly as it had materialized. He moved south, far from the Midwest's hard winters and barren musical fields, to live with his grandmother in Tennessee. To earn a living, he worked on his aunt's chicken farm and later took a factory job. Immediately, though, he discovered a circuit of guitar contests to enter and a wealth of bluegrass players eager to jam with the obviously talented flatpicker. One of those players was Ricky Rorex, a mandolinist who would go on to win the mandolin championship at Winfield. Rorex introduced Kenny to some of the most influential acoustic music of the 20th century - the debut album by the David Grisman Quintet. "We worked a lot of that stuff up," he explained. "It was exciting new music. I'd never tried to mess with anything like it. At first, I couldn't figure out what was going on, but I loved the tunes on it."

By the early 1990s, Kenny had become a regular on the fiercely competitive contest circuit, and began to make his mark as a player. At Winfield, he walked in and took third place in 1991—the first of three consecutive top three finishes for Kenny.

Kenny Smith, age 6, picks with his father, Carl Smith, and his older brother Sonny, age 8, at home in Indiana

Kenny picks with Steve Kaufman at the Walnut Valley Festival in Winfield, Kansas, in 1992. Don Gallagher enjoys the jam.

He then won the guitar contest at Merlefest in 1992. All the years of intense playing and diligent effort to refine his melodic concepts and sense of bluegrass rhythm and drive had begun to emerge in a unique style of flatpicking guitar. "Winfield got me thinking about arrangements and writing my own tunes, just because you might hear 'Cotton Patch Rag' 15 times in the contest," he said, adding, "That was sort of when I realized I wanted to write more flatpicking songs, too."

While making a living at an auto parts plant, Smith knew he loved music but wasn't sure about making it his career. "I didn't think I was good enough and didn't think it was possible," he said. Eventually, he secured a part time gig playing with Claire Lynch and the Front Porch String Band, and had the opportunity to play with her at the annual IBMA Fanfest. That exposure opened some doors for the young flatpicker, including a meeting with the Lonesome River Band's banjo player Sammy Shelor which eventually led to an audition call. "I was a big fan of theirs. When Sammy called and asked me to audition, I couldn't believe it," Kenny recalled. He was asked to join and has played on the group's last two releases.

He took another major step in his professional career in 1997 with the release of *Studebaker*, his first solo album (Sugar Hill SHCD3869). Through the CD's dozen tunes, Smith's dexterity and versatility range from the delicate solo flatpicking guitar he performs on "St. Anne's Reel," a variety of catchy original guitar instrumentals such as "Me and My Farmall" and "Amanda's Reel," to his superb straight bluegrass on cuts like "One Horse Wagon" and "Preachin' by the Roadside." On the instrumental title cut, Kenny even shows off some licks which could have been inspired by Eddie Van Halen himself.

"I had a lot of ideas that were running through my head. It's different for a guitar album," he explained. Acting as producer for the CD also gave him valuable experience on the other side of the control board, which he hopes to expand upon in the future in his own projects.

As one of flatpicking guitar's rising superstars, Kenny knows he has the responsibility to be a strong ambassador of bluegrass and flatpicking guitar. "In the future," he said, "I'd really like to get more younger people interested in bluegrass and old-time music. I see a lot of younger kids and you can see it in their eyes; they are just fascinated with this music because they can play well enough to participate in a jam session, but it takes a long time to really master it. It's a big challenge to them."

That challenge still drives Kenny Smith to hone his musical gifts and pursue new musical horizons. *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine* caught up with the busy musician shortly after New Year's for an interview on his instrumental technique and where he sees flatpicking guitar heading in the 21st century.

How has your lead playing changed with Lonesome River Band since you joined the group?

I'd say at first I was playing too busy, rhythm-wise. Now it's more simplified. It's a little more direct and more basic than when I first joined the group. I think that's just because I didn't know what they wanted. Now I've been able to find a medium where we're both happy. The last couple of years my playing's evolved to suit the song. That's the most important thing. That's what pretty much the whole band is pointing toward: the dynamic of the song. That's been the neat thing over years; everybody's pointed toward that direction.

How about any changes in your lead playing with LRB?

I guess it's gotten more melody oriented, rather than just playing licks. When I first began with them, I was sort of into the licks and the more radical stuff. Now I'm playing more stuff with the melody. You reach a point where you get out of that gunslinger mode and try to do something new. I think the more and more I play, I find myself trying to play things my dad and my granddad would have liked to listen to or would have interested them. What I play now might reach a broader audience than just playing to younger people. They understand the wilder side a little more, but I'm sort of going the other way. I don't ever want to be known as someone who if you learn one of his solos, you've learned all his stuff. I don't want everything to start sounding alike. So I try to do something different as far as each solo goes.

What do you try to accomplish musically in a solo?

I've always enjoyed the fiddle tunes, which comes from my dad. He played a lot of Tommy Jackson, who was a basic square dance fiddler who had really good tone. That's pretty much the stuff I like. So when I'm soloing I think tone and melody. A strong melody gets to me more than something wide open and fast and notey. To me, that sounds like just a bunch of hot licks.

You've said in the past that you never really practiced, that it was always just a matter of playing a lot. Do you feel that some work on scales and arpeggios and learning the modes and what chords fit would have been helpful, or would that

have gotten in your way as a musician?

The disadvantage is that I don't know more musically. I can write tablature, but as for notation, I get bogged down quickly. I took some music theory in high school, which was the first time I was ever exposed to learning about triads and stuff. The way I look at it now is that it's just the old craftsman thing: if it looks right, it is right. To me, if it sounds and feels right, then it is right. I think that's the best rule. As far as doing the scales and stuff, when I hear someone play like that, it sounds mechanical. It sort of leaves me cold. It's one of those deals where I think you reach different maturities in your playing. At first, you want to learn everything. You try to figure out how this one does it and that one does it. Then you get away from that and just start just playing. That's the neat stuff, when you finally leave all that and start playing for yourself.

What's different about your work as a solo artist than with LRB?

It's more laid back. It's a whole different groove. A lot of the stuff I do solo, or that Amanda and I have worked up sitting around house, is more basic than what I do with the band. You can really hear the guitar more. I do have more freedom, but its one of those things when you're producing yourself. You can do a little more, but you also have to lean toward something everyone would like. I want to interest George Shuffler as much as the younger guys, too. As long as George says I'm okay and nods his head, I feel like I've maybe done something that's good.

What's your relationship with George Shuffler?

I know him through the band. Over past four years with LRB, I ran into him a lot. He's been real good to me. He's definitely one of my heroes as far as playing and as a person. He's always taken the time to talk to me. Our relationship means a lot to me, coming from all the stuff he's done. I'd definitely call him a mentor. I love his playing.

Where do you see your playing evolving to? You said you were beginning to understand the concept of the guitar fingerboard as one "position." How did you mean that?

One thing I've done for past four or five years is when I pick up the guitar, I am getting into different fingering. It's stuff I haven't played before. That can come from a fiddle tune, where I try to play it with open notes up the neck. Another thing I've learned, too, is the feel, where I'm not thinking about the notes I'm playing, just how the tune feels. Like on "Me and My Farmall," when I first played that first part, it just really felt good to me. The chords were different than anything I'd played before. I just found myself playing that first part every time I picked up guitar. I played that so much I ended up making it into a song.

Another thing I've been doing is that I have a good friend who's given me some older videos of guitarists like Billy Grammer, Jerry Reed, old Merle Travis stuff and guys like that. And I've been going back watching that stuff. It's just incredible the technique they had: the incredible feel they had on the instrument. They did some really neat stuff. So I'm going back and doing more research now and going back to guys like Lester Flatt, picking out what worked for them and trying to come up with my own thing, too. I've been paying more attention in last couple of years to older bluegrass stuff, the role of the guitar. I'm realizing they were doing the same thing I'm doing now in bluegrass band—playing guitar as a rhythm instrument. It all started from that. Jimmy Martin—he was really aggressive as far as rhythm. He'll put it on ya.

There still must be things that frustrate you as a guitarist. What do you wish you did better or could change?

Staying in tune. That's a hard thing, especially on stage where you're either dealing with being outside where it's hot, or dealing with air conditioning inside and the stage lights. All that stuff's against you. Then when you put on a capo, you bend the strings over frets, so the strings are stretching out of tune. It all gets in the way of good playing.

In addition to your ability to interpret traditional material, you're also becoming known for writing great flatpicking melodies. How do you compose? Is it a deliberate process where you hear a melody line in your head and then go to the guitar to find it, or does it emerge as you're just playing?

Usually it happens while I'm sitting and playing by myself. I may be watching TV. We always have a guitar in living room. So I may come up with something there. Sometimes there's something that may inspire me to write something, but usually I'm just sitting around and messing with it.

What do you think is the best tune you've written?

I guess it would be "Me and My Farmall." That tune really reminds me of the tractor and the years I spent on the farm. That tune feels really good to me.

Photo: Patty Lindley

Kenny Smith with the Lonesome River Band

Kenny Smith playing his signature model Lucas guitar

Where do you see your career going in the next five years? Do you see yourself leading a group like Tony Rice?

I definitely do not want to leave the Lonesome River Band. I really like the guys and the stuff we do. They're like family to me. So right now, I'm happy doing what I'm doing. But later on down road, I do see me and Amanda doing something together.

What's most exciting to you now about the state of bluegrass music?

There's a lot of real good music out there now as far as acoustic things go. As far as the caliber of picking goes, it's moving to a different level. At the campfire jam sessions, there's just a lot of great players out there now. We're seeing a younger fan base, too. That's one neat thing about bluegrass. For as long as I've been playing, there's been no generation gap. It's one of those deals where I respect the guys that were first playing it just as much as the people doing it now. Really, there are not too many musical forms like that.

What keeps you motivated as a professional musician? Do you ever hit plateaus where you don't feel you're making any progress, and how do you get over those?

I guess I'm lucky because playing guitar has never become a job for me. If I ever get to that point, that's when I'll slow down. What's important to me is keeping my playing out of getting into a rut. I think that has to do with the love of the instrument. You've gotta love it enough to try different things on it. I think everybody that picks up the instrument has a certain responsibility to the instrument to try to do it better and not play the same thing all the time.

Kenny Smith's Guitars & Setup

Kenny says his prized 1935 Martin D-18 is still his main axe, but he also loves the Kenny Smith model mahogany dreadnought built for him by Randy Lucas of Lucas Custom Instruments (Lucas Custom Instruments, P.O. Box 1404, Columbus, IN 47202, 812-342-3093, www.lucasguitars.com). "I play that one a lot. That guitar has continually evolved. Randy and I keep in touch every month, and that's been a neat relationship," he reported.

Kenny also uses a self-built guitar as his "sitting around the house" instrument, and added that he's "still waiting for my D-28. I've never owned one." He uses a medium stiff tortoiseshell pick, although he recently experimented with a pick made from the same material used to create false teeth. "I'll try anything that gives you that sound," he said. He rounds his picks to a fairly small size because he feels a smaller pick puts less torque on his hand and tires it out less when playing lead and rhythm. All his guitars are strung with D'Addario EJ-17 mediums, although in the studio he has used the Elixir strings because they stay in tune better. "They slide better under the capo and over the nut better because of the (Gore-Tex) coating. They worked out great. They also last forever," he said. Kenny keeps his guitars with what many flatpickers would consider a pretty high action, mostly as a result of the type of tunes he plays with Lonesome River Band. "We do most of our songs in A, B flat or B, so I'm almost always capoed. We do not do any songs in open position," he explained, so the higher action works better for him when capoed.

Knee Deep In Bluegrass

Sometime last year John Lawless of Acutab Publications had been talking to a few of the musicians who he has featured in his excellent series of bluegrass transcription books and the idea about recording a project with his coral of banjo pickers, mandolin players, and guitarists was thrown about. John says, "I thought it was a great idea and Dave Freeman at Rebel Records also thought it was a good idea." The project, titled *Knee Deep In Bluegrass*, was recorded this past summer and features Sammy Shelor, Scott Vestal, Pete Wernick, Alan Munde, Tony Trischka, Butch Baldassari, Barry Bales, Terry Baucom, Wayne Benson, Alan Bibey, Ronnie Bowman, Rob Ickes, Jason Moore, Joe Mullins, Mark Newton, Alan O'Bryant, Kenny Smith, Tim Stafford, and Ron Stewart. This project will be on the streets by the 16th of May from Rebel Records (Rebel 1759).

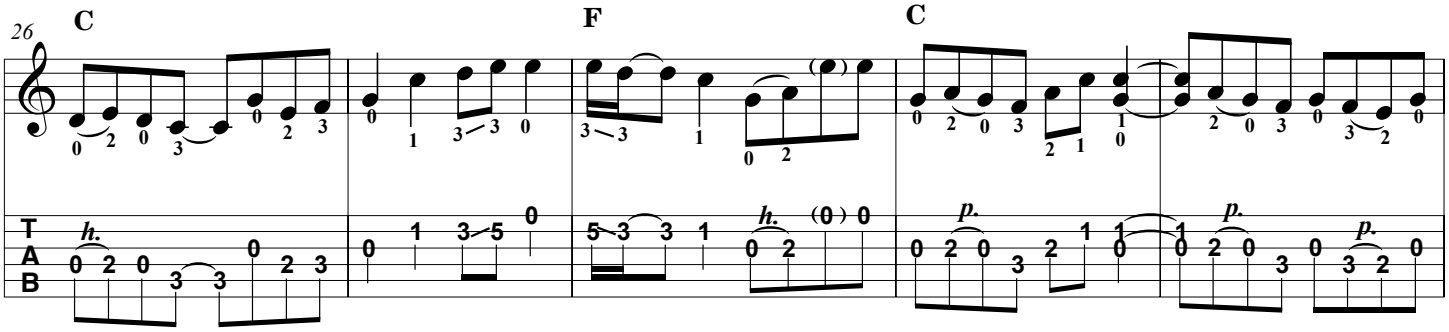
In addition to recording this great CD, the *Knee Deep In Bluegrass* cast also came together on the 7th of January 2000 in Bristol, Tennessee, and performed a live show. This show was recorded by a professional camera crew and John Lawless says that the video of this concert should also be available by May.

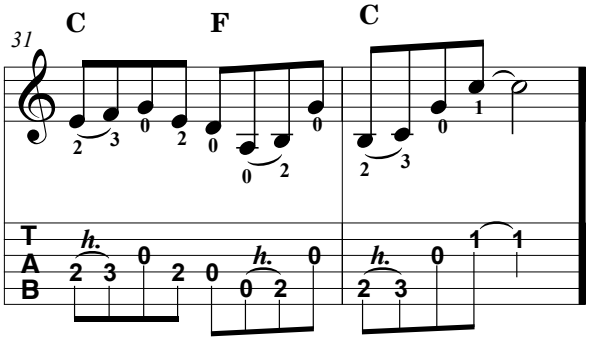
The two guitar players on this project, Kenny Smith and Tim Stafford, got together and recorded "Angeline The Baker" as a guitar duet. Kenny said that it was Tim's idea to record a fiddle tune together and that Tim had a great arrangement of "Angeline The Baker" that he played with the capo only freting the first 5 strings. Tim put the capo on the second fret and played the song out of the D position. With the 6th string remaining tuned to E, he was, in effect, playing as if he was in a dropped-D tuning. Kenny decided to capo up on the fourth fret and play the song out of the C position. Kenny's first two solos are transcribed on the following pages.

Angeline the Baker

Arranged by Kenny Smith
Transcribed by Andy Friedman

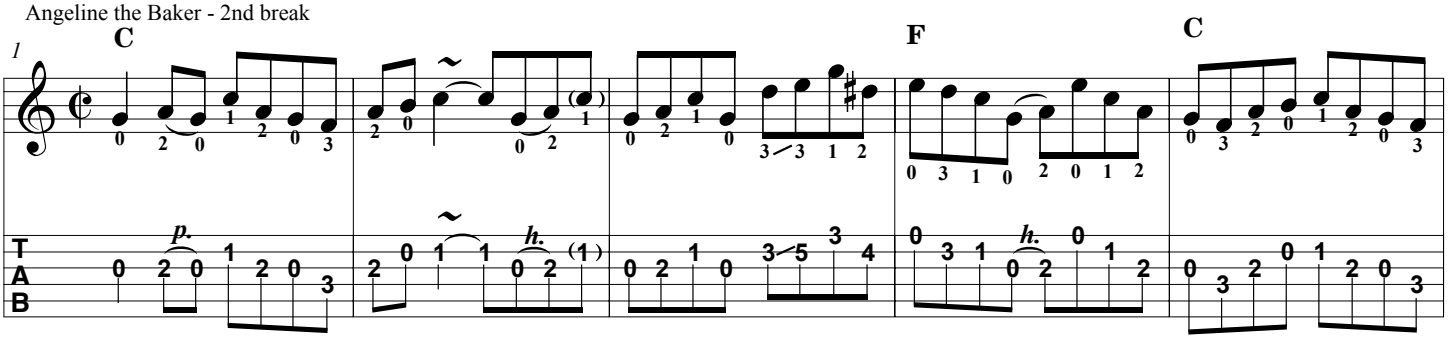
Angeline the Baker (con't)

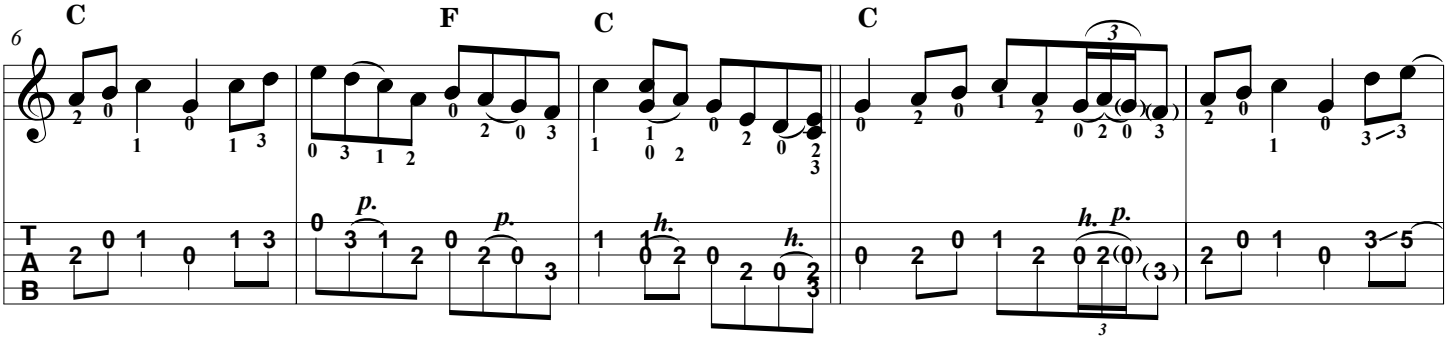


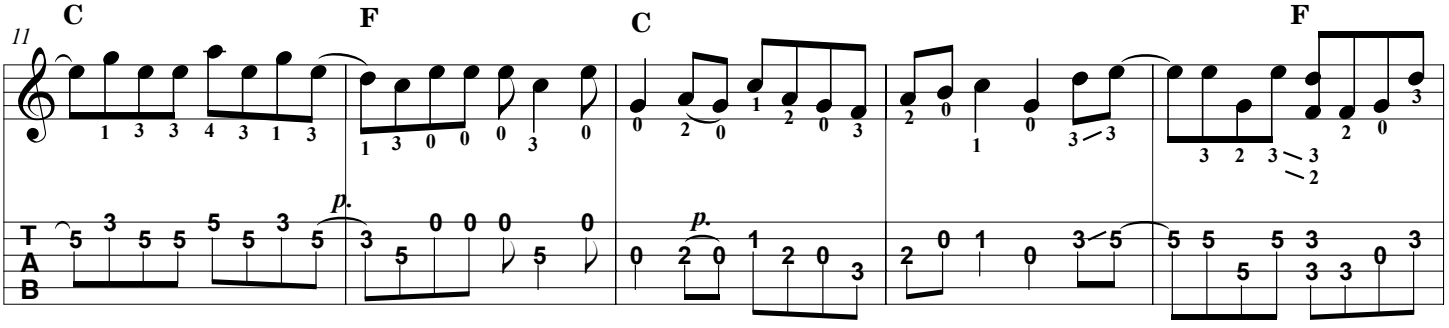


notes: the vibrato in measure 2 is slight

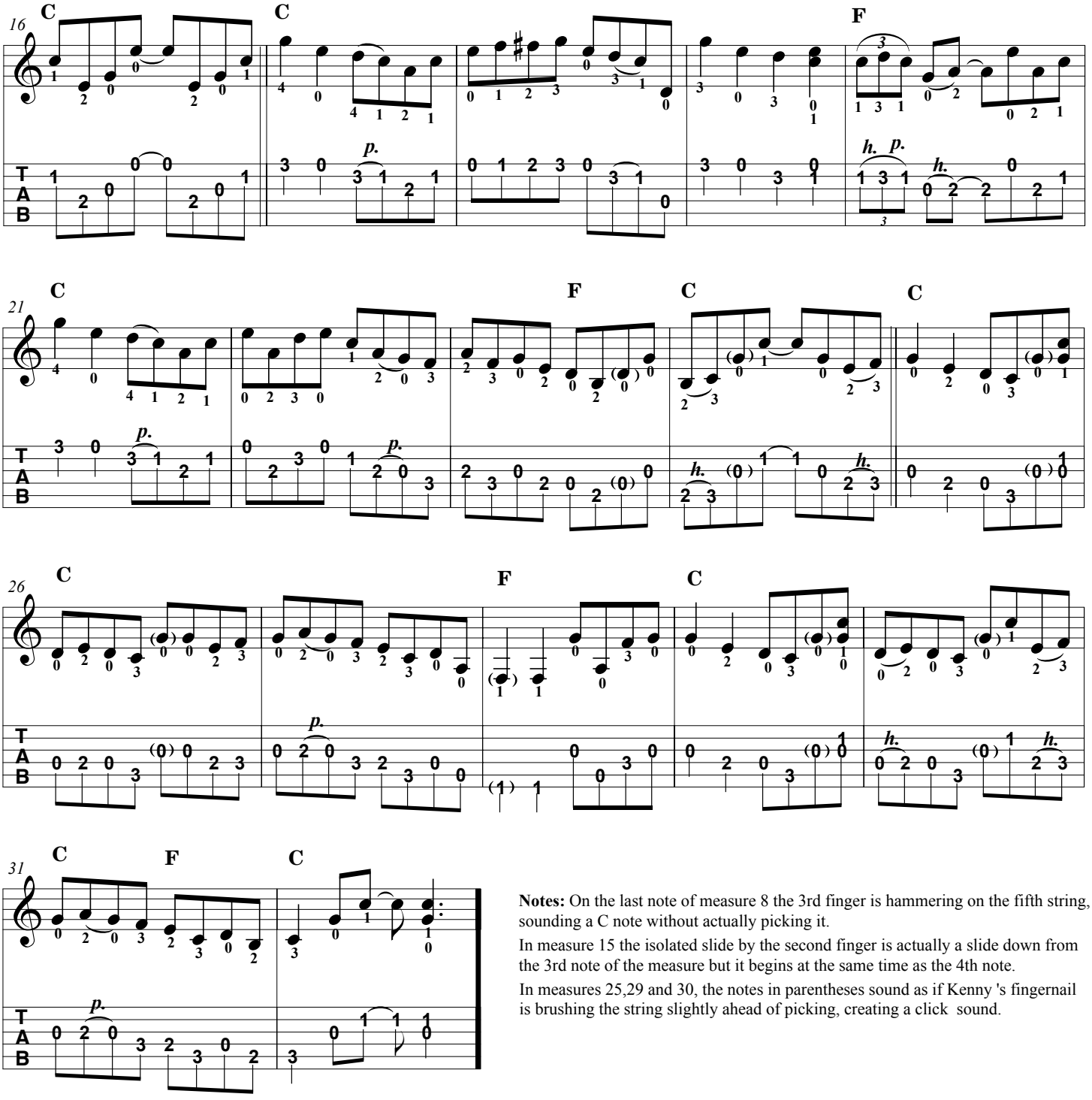
Angeline the Baker - 2nd break







Angeline the Baker (con't)



Notes: On the last note of measure 8 the 3rd finger is hammering on the fifth string, sounding a C note without actually picking it.

In measure 15 the isolated slide by the second finger is actually a slide down from the 3rd note of the measure but it begins at the same time as the 4th note.

In measures 25,29 and 30, the notes in parentheses sound as if Kenny 's fingernail is brushing the string slightly ahead of picking, creating a click sound.

On our *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine* Audio companion CD to this issue you can hear all of the songs which have been tabbed out in this issue plus interviews with our feature artist!
Call 800-413-8296 to Order

Norwegian Wood

by Craig Vance

"Norwegian Wood" is a tune that I first learned back in the early 1970s while I was supposed to be learning stuff like "Amazing Grace." "Norwegian Wood" was more in my league. It was an easy tune to mimic from the original version that the Beatles recorded in 1965 on the album *Rubber Soul*. Some of you may remember it. This song almost unfailingly made its way into folk jams in the late sixties and into the early seventies.

Now I am sitting in the comfort of my friend's dining room in the Adirondacks, and this tune has come back to me. Thirty some odd years later I am pondering options of this tune in Bleecker, New York, and coming up with an instrumental version of a song that I would rather play than sing. The words are great, but I felt that an instrumental version of it would be more poignant at this time, and certainly for the magazine. This was truly a labor of love since John Lennon and Paul McCartney have been a major influence on the beginning of my musical career.

Songs such as this, "Blackbird," "I Will," and "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" have always been some of my favorites of theirs. There are several others they have written that could be done as acoustic guitar instrumentals. If you spend much time in shopping centers, you'll undoubtedly hear one or two of their pieces done in Muzak. If it can be done like that, then there is always a way to get it down on the guitar.

I took the main part of the melody and added some ideas of my own to make this playable as a guitar instrumental. When you get to the B part of the tune, use alternate down/upstrokes throughout. Then follow the pattern up from the G chord to Am, Bm, and back to Am. Go back to the beginning of the B part and then resolve to the Em and A. This part of the tune gives you much more room to improvise. I've come up with a few alternatives myself, but so far, I like this one the best. That is basically what I have done with this version. It functions fine as a solo guitar piece, but since the tune is short, trading it off with another guitarist or another instrument would fill in the gaps. Another nice this is that the tune can be played at breakdown speeds or in a slow waltz time. Use your imagination…travel back in time a little. Just don't forget how to Get Back!

New Release!
Rebel - 1749
Chris Jones
FOLLOW YOUR HEART

Guests include:
Harley Allen
Ron Block
Paul Brewster
Mike Compton
Wayne Benson
Stuart Duncan
Aubrey Haynie
Rob Ickes
Sally Jones
Ron Stuart

Also Available
By Chris Jones
Rebel 1739

For Bookings:
Contact Chris Jones
P.O. Box 984
Franklin, TN 37065
e-mail:nightdrivers@hotmail.com

Rebel Records
P.O. Box 3057 Roanoke, VA 24015
www.rebelrecords.com

Norwegian Wood

Lennon and McCartney **Arranged by Craig Vance**

Beginner's Page

by Dan Huckabee

Perfect Pitch: Music's Greatest Mystery

First, what is "Perfect Pitch?" Basically it's when someone says "sing a C-note," and you can do it. Now that's a little mind boggling, so let's look at it from another angle. What if I were to play a note on my guitar, and then ask you to tell me what note I played? Of course, if you saw what note I played, you could tell me what it was, but I'm talking about hearing a note, and being able to tell what it was, by the sound alone. Very mind boggling!

OK, what are you hearing that tells you that it's a C-note? You are hearing its "highness or lowness." You call tell how high the note is by sound (but how?… ..Patience….I'm getting to that).

I had a friend who had perfect pitch when I was in college. I was in the Music Department at North Texas State University (or The University of North Texas as it's known today). Her name was Laura Jarvis (at the time). I don't think she'd mind if I embarrassed her by bragging on her unique natural talent in such a prestigious magazine. It was so intriguing and amazing to me that I sometimes annoyed her by constantly testing her. I'd sing a note, or hit a note on the dormitory piano, or on my guitar or dobro, and insist that she identify the note that I offered. Man, I'd put my guitar out of tune and she'd say, "That's half way between a G and a G-sharp." Or I'd play a really low note or a really high note at the extreme ends of the piano. I'd do anything I could think of to try to mess her up. Well, curses! Sometimes she'd hesitate, but I never stumped her.

Laura was born with perfect pitch (and she was a good musician too). She played piano. Eventually, I learned that this mysterious gift that she possessed was both a blessing and a curse. The way she described it to me, she had an A-440 ringing in her head, and it wasn't something that she could turn off. At the time I was in my first band, a bluegrass trio called: "The Bluegrass Roadapples." The year was 1971 and the group consisted of Joe Carr (who writes for this magazine), Gregg Kennedy (who later played bass for Bill Monroe), and myself.

Laura always rated our performances based on how well in tune we were. Not how well our instruments were in tune with each other, or how well we sang, but how close to A-440 we were tuned. We could be well in tune together, but not on A-440, and it would be painful for her to endure.

So if she had this ringing sound in her head that she could never turn off, and it was an A-note, how did she identify all the other notes besides A (you're getting ahead of me again)?

Laura also had a talent or skill known as "relative pitch." She knew intervals. She knew how far it was from A to E by the sound. Relative pitch means that if someone gives you a note, you can sing another note, because you know what it would sound like based on the first note. In other words, if I sang: "Oh, I've been working on the railroad." I just happen to know that from "Oh I've" happens to be a "perfect 4th." So if "Oh" was a G, then I could tell you that "I've" is a C.

Most people think that "perfect pitch" is something that you are born with and that "relative pitch" is something that you can learn. That's not exactly true. In fact, I've discovered from being around lots of different musicians, that there are different forms of perfect pitch.

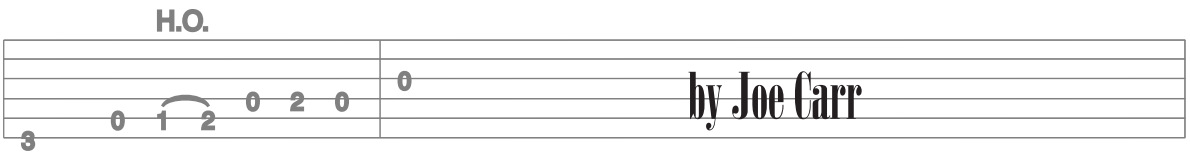
I actually think that "perfect pitch" has been mis-named. I think the name should be changed to "pitch memory." If you can name any note you hear, whatever note someone commands (without having a guitar to cheat), that means that you "remember" what that note sounds like. So what makes a note sound different than another note? How high or low it is. Obvious, but my point is that there is a "color" to pitches. Can you close your eyes and picture "red"? Yes, of course. What if you'd never seen the color red? No. No way! Well, you've heard a G before, but you can't just sing a G, can you? I say if you hear a G often enough, and you are really paying attention to its pitch, you can eventually embed it in your memory.

If you shoot free throws every day on the basketball court, you get to a point where you can hit them more frequently, and if you practice enough, you can sink 10 out of 10. But what if you quit for a month? Your accuracy would drop off. So what does it take to sink a free throw every time? It takes using the exact amount of effort and angles of your arms, and stance of your legs. In other words, it takes "repeatability." If you throw the ball up to the basket exactly the same every time, it will go to the same place, every time.

Getting this to happen on "pitch memory" is hard, but not any harder than free throws. When I'm spending a lot of time with music, I'm at my best at guessing notes. I don't think I've ever been 10 for 10, but I've seen myself improve, so I know that it would continue, if I worked on it enough. I have never been able to hit 10 out of 10 free throws, but I have been closer when I've done it regularly.

But will having perfect pitch make you a better guitar player? I say yes, because it focuses on the discipline of "LISTENING," which is the most important aspect of music. Perfect pitch is one of the chapters in our 2-hour video called: *Understanding the Formula of Music Makes it So Easy!* Another chapter is on "relative pitch." Give us a call at: MusiciansWorkshop 800-543-6125 if you'd like to know more about it. Keep listening, and I'll see you next issue.

Flatpick Rhythm Guitar



by Joe Carr

Rodney Dillard - Rhythm Master

At the suggestion of a reader, I dug out my old Greenbriar Boys and Dillards albums and tried to remember how exciting and new this music (made by young people) sounded back in the 1960s. I was not disappointed. I realized that John Herald and Rodney Dillard had a tremendous influence on many fledgling guitarists who were just getting into "acoustic music" in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This article is dedicated to Rodney Dillard. A later article will concern the Greenbriar Boys' John Herald.

The Dillards made it into living rooms across the country in the 1960s as the Darling family on the Andy Griffith television program. At the core of the group were brothers Rodney and Doug Dillard, who played guitar and banjo respectively. The popularity of the show insured that Dillard albums were available in record shops that normally did not stock much bluegrass music.

Back Porch Bluegrass, the first Dillard album, was released in 1963. It included, for the first time, "Dooley," "Old Home Place," and "Doug's Tune"—songs that have since become bluegrass standards. Countless folkie gutiarists (myself included) converted to bluegrass after hearing this exciting music. If you haven't heard this classic album, check it out.

"Doug's Tune" is a Doug Dillard original which is still a popular jam tune. Rodney's original rhythm guitar arrangement gives the tune a unique sound, described in the original liner notes as "South of the Border." Rodney credits his friend Travis Edmondson with the idea for the accompaniment. Try it out on your local banjo player and watch him/her burst into a big grin.

The original recording was performed in B with a capo at the 4th fret, but for the *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine* Audio CD recording I played in open G. Special thanks to Alan Munde for playing banjo with me! The original recording of the tune begins with Mitch Jayne's solo bass intro which is joined by Rodney's catchy rhythm lick built on a G6 chord. This bass line is continued against the V chord when the banjo enters. I have provided an two alternate measures at the end of the tab which can be substituted for measures 13 and 14.

The Dillards released two other albums on Electra in the 1960s. *Live, Almost*, showcases their wonderful live performance and Mitch Jayne's hilarious stage patter. *Pickin' and Fiddlin'* is an all-instrumental album which features the fiddling of 21 year old contest champion Byron Berline. All three of these recordings are excellent and highly recommended.

ALLEGHENY ECHOES

4th Annual Snowshoe Workshops
Snowshoe Mtn. Resort • Snowshoe, WV
June 25 - July 1, 2000

Traditional flatpicking instruction on guitar by:

Robin Kessinger - advanced - 2 time nat'l champion
Larry Combs - simple leads - Bing Bros. lead guitar
Danny Arthur - backup - Bing Bros. backup guitar
Chris Nickel - bluegrass lead

Also instruction available in:
fiddle, banjo, mandolin, vocals, bass, dulcimer, hamemered dulcimer, creative writing

For catalog and information:
Phone-304-799-7121

e-mail: mawbing@hotmail.com
muckle_h@hotmail.com

Mike Bing • Rt 2 Box128-M • Marlinton, WV 24954

Class size limited to 10

Doug's Tune - Rhythm

Arranged by Rodney Dillard
Transcribed by Joe Carr

MERLEFEST

April 27 - 30, 2000

Doc Watson
Richard Watson

9th annual Doc Watson
International Guitar Championship
Tony Rice, Jack Lawrence,
IIIrd Tyme Out, Willie Nelson, New Grange,
String Cheese Incident, Kelly Joe Phelps,
Ralph Stanley & Clinch Mountain Boys,
Peter Rowan, Jorma Kaukonen and many more

1-800-343-7857 US 9 am - 4 pm **1-336-838-6267** International

FAX **1-336-838-6277** E-Mail **merlfest@wilkes.cc.nc.us**

Box Office Opened **Nov. 9**

order tix by web

www.merlefest.org

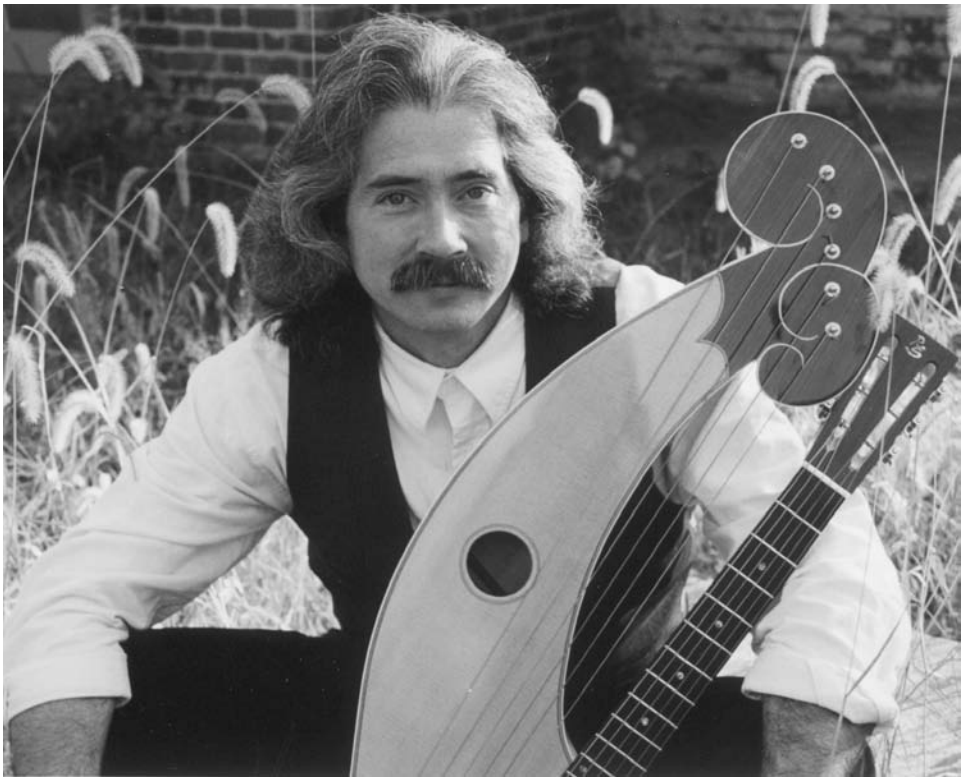
UPDATED PERFORMERS, SCHEDULES, MAILING LIST, AND MORE ON-LINE

MerleFest P.O. Box 1299 Wilkesboro, NC 28697-1299

LOCATED ON THE CAMPUS OF WILKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WILKESBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Flatpick Profile:
Stephen Bennett

by David Dugas



Imagine Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker Suite" played by an orchestra comprised of the following instruments: a 1909 Dyer Brothers Harp Guitar, 1932 National Triolian Resonator Guitar, 1973 Martin D-28S, 1983 Stuart Mossman Winter Wheat Guitar, 1983 Takamine C. Bruno Anniversary Guitar, 1986 G&L Broadcaster, 1988 Lorenzo Pimentel Classical, 1966 Gibson 12 String Guitar, 1997 Ron Spillers Harp Guitar, 1995 Taylor Acoustic Bass and a 1977 Martin 0028C Classical Guitar. Now imagine all those instruments played by one person (recorded via multi-rack recorder) who faithfully followed the original score. That's Stephen Bennett, a player whose technical versatility includes electric guitar, fingerstyle guitar and flatpicking. Stephen is not "just" another esoteric multi-tracking musician. He can get down and flatpick with the best of them; witness his stage performances with Steve Kaufman and Beppe Gambetta at the 1999 Walnut Valley Festival in Winfield, Kansas.

After one of his shows at last year's Walnut Valley festival, Bryan Kimsey and I caught up with Stephen…

You won the fingerstyle contest and placed in the flatpicking contest here?

The other way around. I won the flatpicking contest and I placed in the fingerstyle contest.

When was that?

Well, the first time I came here was in 1983. I came in not having any idea what the festival was going to be like. I placed second in the flatpicking contest. I was camped right next to Pat Donahue, who won the fingerstyle contest that year. We stayed up late playing every night. I also did the fingerpicking contest and didn't place. I came back in 1984 and didn't place in the flatpicking contest. I came back in 1985 and just fingerpicked—I came in third. I came back in 1987 and won the flatpicking contest.

How did you become interested in playing the guitar?

There was an acoustic guitar sitting around the house that my mother had, an old Framus. One of those Bavarian guitars that she thought she'd learn to play someday, but never got around to it, so it was sitting around. I picked it up and started playing folk music at first, then rock and roll grabbed me. I grew up playing in rock and roll bands in high school and playing at school dances.

How did you become interested in flatpicking?

I didn't really know what flatpicking was when I was a kid. The night I went away to college I heard a Leo Kottke record and that completely converted me to fingerstyle. It wasn't long after that I heard a Doc Watson record and I knew I loved flatpicking too. Of course Doc also fingerpicks. I absolutely loved Doc Watson. So, it was really his playing that made me want to flatpick.

Did you do the traditional thing where you wore out the records trying to learn the licks?

I did learn a few Doc Watson things. I read music. I've read music for my whole life. I started out playing clarinet in the school band and taking lessons. I also had piano lessons. So I wound up getting books of fiddle tunes not arranged for guitar—just fiddle tune books. I would learn fiddle tunes that way and not necessarily copy someone's arrangement note for note. I learned a few Doc Watson things that way, "Black Mountain Rag" and stuff. But mostly I didn't care about sounding exactly like that. I loved the flavor of it.

How'd you develop a pick direction? Where'd you get instruction on doing the Down-Up-Down?

Well, to me it was the only thing that made sense. I basically play exactly the way Steve Kaufman does as far as the right hand goes and I just sort of arrived at it on my own. I didn't read it in a book or anything and nobody showed me. That's just what made sense.

In playing electric guitar I used mostly down strokes. You can do a lot of real fast things on electric guitar just using down strokes as long as you work in lots of pull-offs and hammer-ons at the same time. But I always knew that. I could hear it in my head, but I couldn't make it happen

using down strokes on the acoustic guitar. So, I just sort of arrived at the same thing Kaufman did—that down-up is really the logical way to do things. Obviously people have some variations on it.

Do you tend to stick with the down-up or do you mix downs and ups or do you let it come out as whatever you want? Are you conscious of what your right hand is doing?

No, it's a system. It's just the way it is for me, just like with Steve—he doesn't even think about it. I just don't think about whether it's going to be an up stroke or a down stroke unless I blow a lick and the lick is not working. It's probably because I didn't start it on the right stroke. But mostly I just don't think about that anymore. It's ingrained.

How did the fingerpicking influence the flatpicking? Did they cross over or did you try to keep them separate?

I have thought of them as separate for quite a while. There are obvious advantages and drawbacks to both. You get multiple voices with fingerstyle. You can play a bass line with your thumb and you can be off doing melodies, internal voices and harmony voices when you are playing fingerstyle. On the other hand, you don't have that driving single string sound that a flatpicker gets. It's a very rare fingerpicker that can get that driving single note, that real strong flatpicking sound. In fact, I've tried to get that as a fingerpicker. At times I've thought that I'm not going to flatpick anymore, but I always come back to it because I love the sound and I've never been able to capture that with my fingerstyle playing. I can capture other things with my fingers that just don't work at all with a pick. I just love 'em both.

Do you ever use a hybrid of pick and fingers?

Like some of the Nashville guys do? No, I really don't do that. That never felt right. A tune is either going to be a flatpicking or a fingerpicking tune. I can do the same tune either way. It just depends on what I'm after. I love both those sounds.

What about contests? What do you feel it gave your playing? Did it take anything away from your playing? Did the contest playing hurt you in any way or did it help you?

The contest thing is great. It was such a boost to come here in 1983. I'd won a couple of local guitar contests back in Virginia, but to come here to the national championship for the first time and win second place… I mean that was such a shot in the arm. Of course that makes you want to get better and come back and try to win first place. So as a result you try harder and harder, you play more and you get better. So sure, the contest is a good thing. In one sense contests are bad because music is not really about competition, it's about cooperation and interplay. Hearing what the other guy is doing and doing something that compliments it. On the other hand, it's a great incentive, a great way to improve yourself. It makes you say to yourself "I want to do better next year"!

Do you think that a contest encourages overplaying? Do you think that the guy that wins is the most musical player or is he just the flashiest player sometimes?

Well, people will argue that back and forth. Everybody is not always happy with who wins every year, but you can't please everybody. A contest couldn't get any fairer than Winfield. You have blind judging and you have five judges.

And one of those judges is going to be on the musical side and one is going to be on the flashy side, so it's going to even out, right?

Yeah! Overall, it's going to even out and overall I think it's going to be the essential musicality or lack thereof that's going to come through. Again, you're not going to please everybody all of the time.

Do you use the same guitar for both fingerpicking and flatpicking?

I use the same guitar. Because the fingerpicking would become more fatiguing with high action, I generally tend to go with a lower setup, lower action and just sort of sacrifice. I usually have a little more buzz than I probably ought to for flatpicking. I use light gauge D'Addario's Phosphor Bronze strings. In terms of equipment, I use a Pendulum Audio preamp and I have a Highlander pickup and an AKG C-411 microphone.

Do you have a blender on it?

Yeah, it's part of the Pendulum. I can change it from the pickup to microphone, so I can mix up the percentage.

What kind of pick do you use?

I used to like the Dunlop blue Tortex (1 mm) pick. But I had been experiencing arm burnout for some years (the picking arm). I had attributed it to a circular thing of not doing as much flatpicking as I used to. My arm had been cramping up to the point of nearly locking up entirely. One day I could not find my Dunlop blue and picked up a thinner pick. All of the sudden I wasn't experiencing the arm burnout and flatpicking was fun again. I realized the stiffness of the pick was at fault. I love the tone that the heavier pick gives, but it's not worth the pain and aggravation. I'm using a pick that is about the equivalent of a Fender heavy, or I use the yellow Tortex, around .74 mm, I think.

And your guitar?

The guitar I use was made by Jim Merrill in Virginia. He built it for me.

How'd you run across him?

Well, he had worked on my guitars for the last 10 years. He did some work on my harp guitar. At the time I had to drive about an hour to get to where he was, but he had a reputation as the best repairman and it was well deserved. Then he started building instruments and he built this one for me. It has Koa back and sides and a Cedar top.

What's the nut width on the guitar? Is it standard, or 1 3/4"…?

I don't know the exact measurement, but it's slightly wider than standard.

Do you have a preference in neck shape? Do you like a V shape?

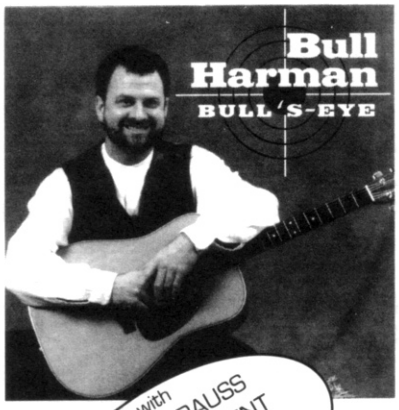
It's more rounded, just smooth round-C shape I guess… It's definitely not the V. I don't really pay that much attention to those things. I should I suppose…either a guitar feels good to me or it doesn't.

He worked on your instruments before, so he already knew what you preferred?

He made some judgment calls on his own. On some of the things he asked me about the guitar and I said, "I don't know what I want," so he just did some things to make it the right guitar for me. It's a great guitar. I like it a lot. And again, it may not be for everybody, but I find it to be the perfect flatpicking guitar the way I have it set up, but I use it for both styles.

One last thing is you mentioned earlier that you read music and yet you are known to have a really good ear. How did you go about developing the two? A lot of people that tend to read don't tend to develop their ear.

I've just been doing both for so long that I don't even really think about the difference. I suppose there are some symphony players, classical players that only read and if you put them in a circle with some sort of bluegrass and it was their turn they wouldn't know what to do because they didn't have the page in front of them. I'd hate to be that way. I've never had that, because when I was a kid I was also playing rock and roll. I started doing it by copying other people's solos and learned some of the licks. You get some of their ideas and you figure out how to make a phrase, a musical phrase. I just don't think about the distinction anymore. I can look at a piece and know what it sounds like without playing it or I can sit down and play. I can learn a fiddle tune by sitting down with somebody and have them show it to me or I can just read it. That's really handy.



with
ALISON KRAUSS
RHONDA VINCENT
TINA ADAIR
and many others.

CD & CASSETTE AVAILABLE NOW!

CD $ 15.00
Cassette $ 10.00
Add for S&H $ 3.00

Send a check or money order to:

Bull Harman
PO Box 2024
Florissant, MO 63032

www.angelfire.com/biz3/BullHarman

If you had a preference on a fiddle tune, which would you take?

It doesn't matter. I'll learn the tune any way I can.

How about variations on a fiddle tune? When you see the written music does it tend to lock you into that or is it still easy for you to come up with variations?

No, I don't have any trouble making up variations. Again, it's just from doing it for so long and being used to improvising from when I was a kid. I don't know if that's a good answer or not.

What's it like playing the harp guitar?

The harp guitar is great, it's a wonderful instrument.

Why don't more people play them?

Because they don't know about 'em. There aren't many out there. Although there are more being made. I know of a dozen or so that have been made because of people saw me playing mine. So I think there is a small renaissance of harp guitars out there. It's a tough instrument. It's not for everybody, but it's a wonderful instrument. It's not a good flatpicking instrument, there's no question about it. There's no reason to flatpick it…Beppe's got one here too.

Michael Hedges had one.

Yeah, and his was the same as my great-grandfather's. The way to use it for flatpicking is not to use the bass strings. You know what the sustain pedal on a piano does—it just lets the strings ring. You get those sympathetic vibrations. This happens when you flatpick on the six-string part of the harp guitar. It gets all those other strings ringing so you have this wonderful reverb.

What are you doing now in music?

Well, I do a lot of different things. I keep making recordings. They are mostly fingerstyle recordings, but I try to put on some flatpicking pieces on each CD, including the newest one. It has two flatpicking pieces on it. I try to contribute something to the repertoire. I try not to do what everybody else is doing. I'm trying to do something a little different. That's the only way you are going to get noticed—to do something a little bit different. My flatpicking tunes are different than everybody else's.

I do things where I'll layer guitars. I did a version of Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite" where it's all guitars. It's everything from screaming electrics to flatpicked dreadnoughts to nylon string guitar to harp guitar to slides all mixed up together playing a very literal version of Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite."

I got invited to go play in France next month and play harp guitar. That's another thing that's helped me create a niche. There are a lot of good guitar players out there. Maybe I could make as it as a guitar player, maybe I couldn't, but there are virtually no harp guitar players. So that helps me get noticed and it just helps the whole thing. People ask, "Where did the harp guitar come from?"

Yeah, how did you pick up on it?

It was my great grandfather's instrument. About 10 years ago I was able to acquire it from my uncle. The instrument sat in his basement for 20 years since my great grandfather died. That's one of my musical undertakings—to try to bring that instrument more attention. Not on the latest recording, but the one before that called *Harp Guitar* is just the harp guitar. There is flatpicked harp guitar on that CD. Only one tune, but I did put one on there.

Next year I'm going to play as a soloist with an orchestra. Do you know a mountain dulcimer player named David Schnaufer? He did a piece called "Blackberry Winter" where he took "Blackberry Blossom" and some other tunes and used them for dulcimer and orchestra. I think I'm going to be doing that piece with the orchestra. I'll actually be flatpicking with an orchestra behind me. It'll be an interesting rhythm instrument.

To find out more about Stephen Bennett, his recordings and performance dates, visit his website at www.harpguitar.com. You can also contact Stephen via email at sb@harpguitar.com.

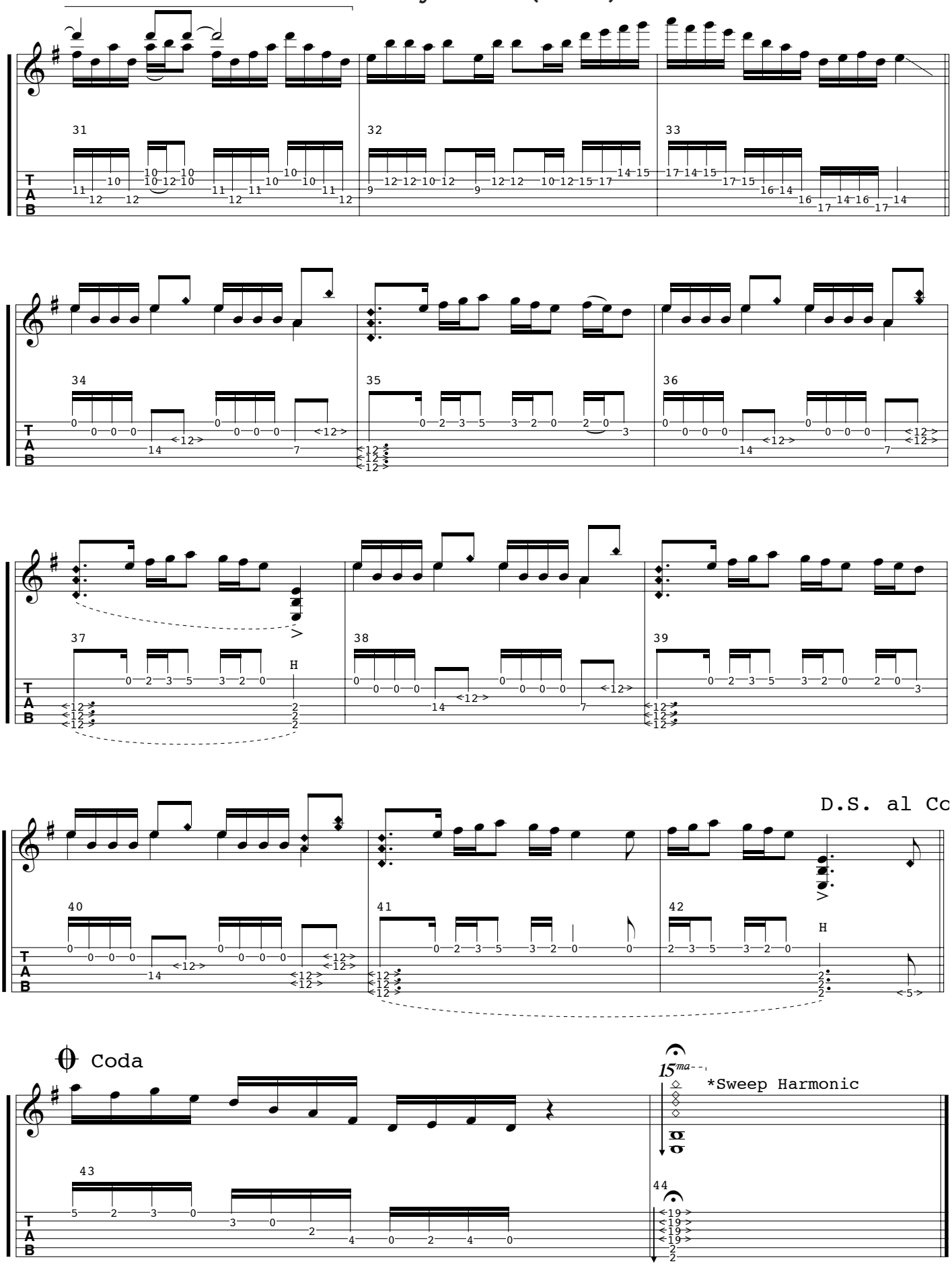
On Stephen's most recent release No Net he picks his fantastic arrangement of "Cooley's Reel." We have provided the transcription of Stephen's break on the following pages. You can also hear Stephen play this tune on the *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine* audio CD which accompanies this issue.

Cooley's Reel

Arranged by Stephen Bennett
Transcribed by Jay Brian Kummer

Cooley's Reel (con't)

Cooley's Reel (con't)



Flatpicking & Folk/Acoustic Rock

by John Tindel

Little Martha, Part 2

Greetings and welcome to this, my first column of the brave new century. If, in fact, we have made it entirely into the next century of just the last year of this one. It depends, I guess, on if you are a "counter" or a "measurer." Counters start from "one" while "measurers" start from "zero." Notice that you've rarely, if ever, heard a musician start off a song by saying, "zero, one, two. . ." Regardless, let's leave our exact position on the calendar to the counters and measurers and move on to the completion of the late, great Duane Allman song "Little Martha," begun in my column last century (Vol. 4, No. 1 Nov/Dec 1999). My apologies to those of you who learned the first half then and have been breathlessly awaiting the exciting conclusion, which is as follows.

Let's start by getting back into the open E tuning we used in the first half of the song. Raising the 5th string up a whole step to B, the 4th string a whole step to E, and the 3rd string a half step to G#, gives us the same notes as the first position E major played in standard tuning. Now, go find your ragged, dog-eared copy of the aforementioned issue of this esteemed publication and re-familiarize yourselves with the beginning section of the tune. If you can't find it or, worse, don't have it, refer to the last section of the bridge, which is essentially the same as the beginning of the song.

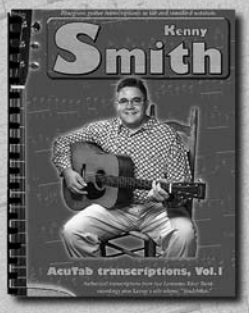
In the first part, drag your pick down across the three highest strings in the first three chords to slightly arpeggiate them. Be sure to cleanly articulate the triplet sequence that follows, as well as the cool descending run ending in the chiming harmonics. Very nice, don't you think?

Watch for the apparent rhythm change at this point. The tempo and time signature stay the same but the feel changes to a dotted eighth sort of thing, using pretty much the same chord forms as before.

As always, start slow and get it clean, then bring it up to speed gradually. I hope you'll have as much fun playing this melodic instrumental as I have had.

Remember, until next time, that the more you play, the better you get, and the better you get, the more you play!

Acutab Guitar



Just out, our newest release, for **Lonesome River Band** guitarist **Kenny Smith**! The book contains standard notation and beamed tab for Kenny's solos from **2 LRB albums** plus his terrific solo project, ***Studebaker***. Includes 33 solos for 25 tunes with left hand fingering and pick directions on tricky passages. All transcriptions were carefully proofed with Kenny. 74 pages

$25.00 (US)

Our first guitar book, for flatpicking monster **Tim Stafford**. Learn Tim's solos from all 3 **Blue Highway** albums plus **Alison Krauss' *Every Time You Say Goodbye***. Tab and standard notation for 23 tunes all carefully proofed by Tim for accuracy. Left hand fingering and pick directions are also included. 54 pages

$20.00 (US)

Slow down those tricky licks using your Windows or Macintosh computer. With Transkriber, you can reduce the speed of any prerecorded music up to 1/26 speed without changing the pitch. Also features looping and EQ options.

$49.95 (US)

order online!
www.acutab.com

US/Canadian mail orders please add $1.70 S&H for books, $2.25 for software

MasterCard VISA

AcuTab Publications • P.O. Box 21061 • Roanoke, VA • 24018
response@acutab.com • 540-776-6822 • 540-776-6827 (FAX)

Flatpicking Mercantile

Your resource for guitar accessories, instructional material, flatpicking CDs, and more!
Call 800-413-8296 for a free copy.

Little Martha (Part 2)

Written by Duane Allman **Arranged by John Tindel**

Flatpicking Guitar

All Back Issues are Still Available

$4.50 per single issue
Volume One Complete Set (six issues): $24.00
Volume One Complete Set plus CD: $37.00
Volume Two Complete Set (six issues): $24.00
Volume Two Complete Set plus CD: $37.00
Volume Three Complete Set (six issues): $24.00
Volume Three Complete Set plus CD: $37.00
(Shipping and Handling Charges are not Included)

Send Check or Money Order to:
High View Publications
P.O. Box 2160
Pulaski, VA 24301
or Call 800-413-8296

Flatpicking Guitar Magazine CD

Flatpicking Guitar Magazine presents
Flatpicking '97
Featuring 23 of today's best bluegrass guitarists:
• Peter McLaughlin • Chris Jones • Dix Bruce and Jim Nunally •
• Brad Davis • Scott Nygaard • David Grier •
• Jack Lawrence • Steve Palazzo • Beppe Gambetta •
• Mark Cosgrove • Dale Adkins • Norman Blake • Allen Shadd •
• Joe Carr • Steve Kaufman • Steve Pottier and Sandy Rothman •
• John McGann • George Shuffler • Mike Whitehead • Gary Cook •

Now You Can Hear What You've Been Reading

$16.00

Price includes postage cost
Send Check or Money Order to:
Flatpicking Guitar Magazine
PO Box 2160
Pulaski, VA 24301
or call
(800) 413-8296

Subscribe to *Flatpicking Guitar*! Call Toll Free to Order: (800) 413-8296

FLATPICKING GUITAR MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Please Print Clearly

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____

		Check One: Without Audio	With Audio
One year US (6 Issues):	**$22.00**	☐ **$52.00**	☐
One year Canada (6 Issues):	**$30.00**	☐ **$66.00**	☐
One year Foreign (6 Issues):	**$37.00**	☐ **$85.00**	☐

VISA/MASTERCARD(Circle One) Expiration Date: _____

Credit Card Number: _____

Signature: _____

Phone Number:( ) _____

Send Check or Money Order to:
High View Publications
P. O. Box 2160
Pulaski, VA 24301

Advance payment is required. We do not bill for subscriptions - Thank You!

Steve Kaufman's Acoustic Camps

Flatpicking Camp ~ June 18-25, 2000
Mandolin Camp ~ June 14-18, 2000
Banjo Camp ~ June 14-18, 2000

The Millennium Camp's Staff includes:

Carlo Aonzo, Butch Baldassari, Terry Baucom, Stephen Bennett, Alan Bibey, Rolly Brown, Dennis Caplinger, John Carlini, Brad Davis, Beppe Gambetta, Murphy Henry, Steve Kaufman, John Moore, Don Stiernberg and Bryan Sutton

A Musical Event Like None Other ~
Specially designed for the Beginner through Professional
Located On The Campus of Maryville College in Maryville, TN
17 mi. So. of Knoxville, TN.

Your Paid Registration Entitles You To:

- **Rotating 2 Hour Classes with ALL of the Main Teachers**
- **All Meals and Lodging (Companion Packages with apt. style lodging available)**
- **Admission to All The Nightly Concerts**
- **Special Guests Doc Watson, David Grier (Guitar Camp) and others TBA.**
- **Morning Group Lecture Series**
- **Highly focused Afternoon Panel Sessions- the Camp Staff and other special guests.**
- **Slow Jam Periods**
- **Ensemble Work, Open Mike Time, Nightly Jams**
- **4th Annual Steve Kaufman Flatpicking Contest (Guitar Camp Only) ~ CAMP REGISTRATION REQUIRED ~ Sanctioned by the National Flatpicking Championships - 1st, 2nd and 3rd Prizes- too many to mention!**
- **Airport Shuttle Service**
- **On Site "Kamp Doctor's" Lynn Dudenbostel, Marty Lanham and Steve Huber**
- **Concert Series with Tennessee's Area Top Bluegrass Bands and Soloists**

Camp Fees
Flatpicking Camp - $650.00
Mandolin Camp - $425.00
Banjo Camp - $425.00
Fees Include All Classes, Meals and Lodging plus all Concerts and Workshops

Call or Write for a Kamp Brochure

Call or Write Today!

Call Today! Limited Spaces *-For Registrations and Camp Info:*

Steve Kaufman's Acoustic Camp
PO Box 1020, Alcoa, TN 37701
1-800-FLATPIK or 423-982-3808 (Operator's and Tape Machines are Standing By 24 hr.)
Steve@Flatpik.com www.Flatpik.com Register On – Line

Don't Sleep Through This Opportunity!

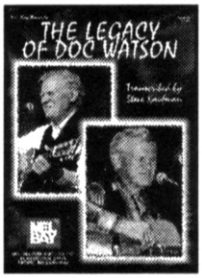
The Camp Series is Sponsored in part by **~ 1st Quality Music, Acoustic Guitar, AcuTab, AllWays Travel, Ameritage Cases, Bluegrass Unlimited, Blue Heron Cases, Collings Guitars, Colorado Case Company, D'Addario Strings, Deering Banjos, DR Strings, Fishman Transducers, Flatpicking Guitar Magazine, J. W. Gallagher and Son, Gibson Acoustic Division, Homespun Tapes, Mandolin Magazine, Martin Guitars, Mass Street Music, Mel Bay Publications, Murlin's Music World, PicKing, Roy's Record Shop, Santa Cruz Guitars, Shubb Capos, Taylor Guitars and Waverly Tuning Machines.**

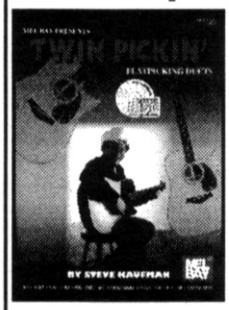
3 Time National Guitar Champion

"The boy can pick and he knows what good music is" Doc Watson

Steve's Latest
Kamp Kaufman
The Best of The Kamp Concert Series
CD only $15.00
Plus $2. P/H

The Legacy of DOC WATSON
By Steve Kaufman
An Incredible Book and Project!
$25 + $3.75 p/h





Also New ~ from Steve Kaufman ~
The Anthology of Norman Blake
40+ songs (mostly vocals) written in Notes and tab.
$25 + $3.75 p/h

Just Out!
Steve Kaufman in Performance ~ Flatpicking – To The Next Level
51 min. VHS Video
$20 plus $3.75 p/h
Send for your *Free Catalog!*

1-800-FLATPIK
800-352-8745 or 865-982-3808 Voice/Fax
Steve Kaufman
PO Box 1020, Alcoa, TN 37701
ask for your "Free but not Cheap" ~
Flatpicker's Hotline Newsletter
Visa / Mastercard Welcome!
www.Flatpik.com
Steve Kaufman's 5th Annual Flatpicking Camp ~ June 18-25, 2000
Mandolin Camp ~ June 14-18, 2000
Banjo Camp ~ June 14-18, 2000
Call Today~It Only Takes A Moment!

Kaufman's Corner

by Steve Kaufman

Hi friends and welcome back to my corner of the flatpicking world. I discussed this next type of tune at great length with our eminent leader, Dan Miller, and came up with a new theme for the next several issues: Waltzes and Polkas. These are two of my favorite types of tunes. The waltz allows the player to perfect his or her sustain, tone and taste and the Polka allows the player to concentrate more on the bounce rather than the speed element. This issue will deal with the Polka.

I have chosen a tune that I became reacquainted with this year called "Jesse Polka." The first part is a little lame (basically half notes and quarter notes) so I have added a few (maybe a few too many) hammer-on pull-off trill type triplets. You may chose to leave some of the trills out and if so, only play the first note of the three (DA instead of da da da) as a quarter note giving it one full beat. The chord structure of this tune has been charted in its basic form. We could spend an entire issue going through the chords because it allows plenty of space for moving or passing chords.

The first and second parts should not pose much threat. Watch our for the down ups in the 2nd part of the 1st ending. Since you have the hammer on and pull off with eighth notes you will have to pay attention to the pick direction. D-U-D-U-X-U-D-X. Down is how the measure will be played with the "X" representing a pick rest.

The third part has one catch. Measures 3 and 7 have some awkward fingerings. Use the 1st, 2nd and 4th fingers for the 1st three notes and the rest will fall into place.

The fourth part: This is a part similar to a passage in Clarinet Polka. The droning notes on the 2nd and 3rd string are to ring out like open strings but the one alternate note is supposed to chop off or play staccato. This is two different "colors" in the same measure and is interesting and sometimes difficult (Listen to the accompanying FGM CD for the demo).

I hope you all have fun with this great number. I look forward to seeing you all at the Kamp this summer and thanks to FGM for their Flatpicking Kamp support. Added to this year is a visit by Doc Watson and David Grier. This will be a blast!

Let me know how this one goes... Bye for now—Steve K.

GUITAR BOOKS from Sokolow Music
tablature & music

FLATPICKING COUNTRY CLASSICS VIDEO...Backup & solos to *San Antonio Rose, Wild Side of Life, Waltz Across Texas, City of New Orleans &* more. Normal speed & slowed down w/split screen. Video & book $30

JIMMIE RODGERS...26 transcriptions & bio & photos: *T for Texas, In the Jailhouse Now, Mule Skinner Blues, Any Old Time,* etc. Book $20

GREAT COUNTRY STANDARDS...Finger- & flatpicking versions of 14 classics like *John Hardy, Double Eagle, Down Yonder.* Book & Cassette $22

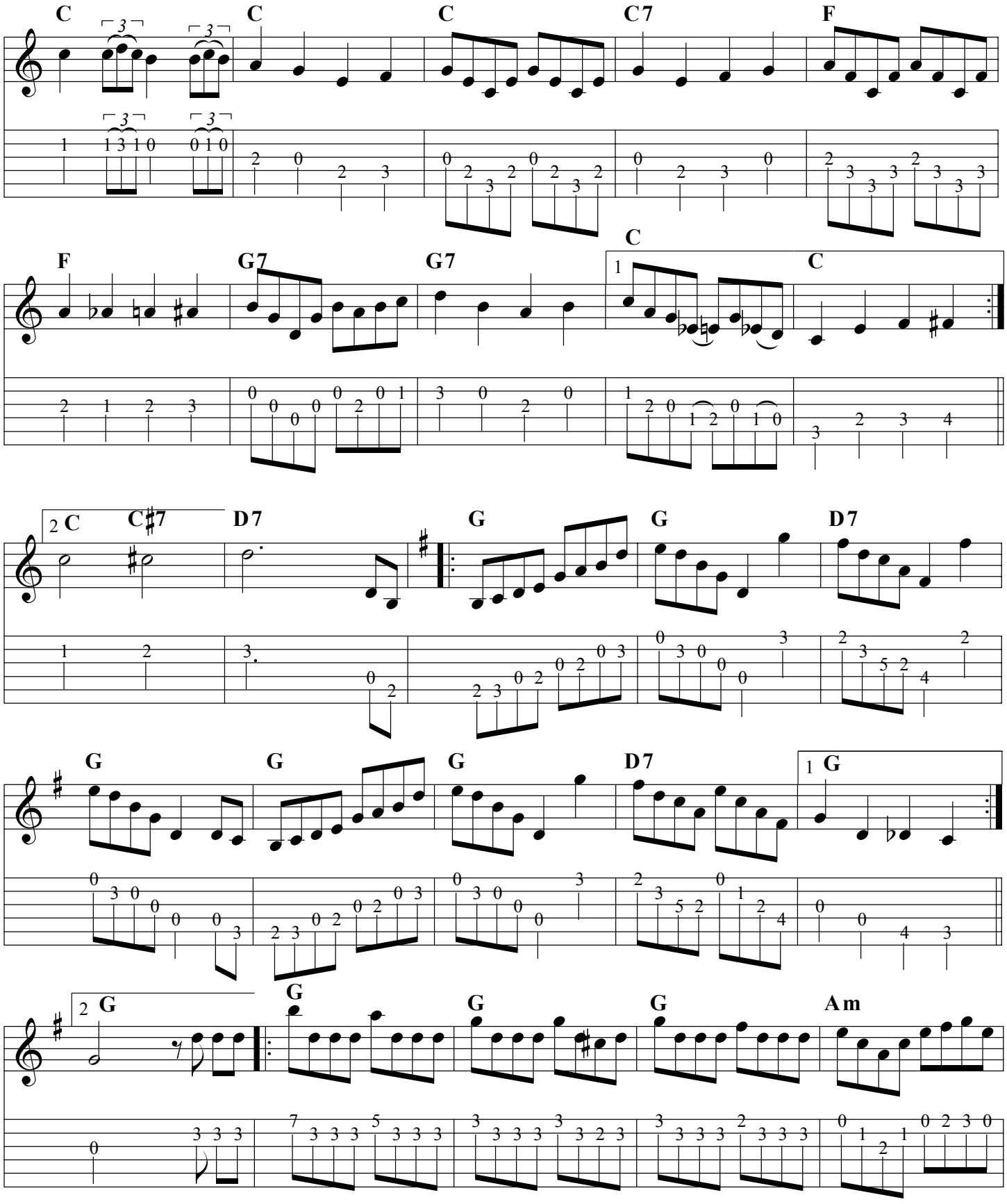
GOSPEL GUITAR...finger- & flatpicking versions of *Amazing Grace, Will the Circle Be Unbroken, Closer Walk with Thee,* etc. Book & Cassette $16

Order from ***SOKOLOW MUSIC,*** *PO Box 491264, Los Angeles CA 90049. Add $1 postage ($3 foreign) per item, pay w/check, money order or plastic (310)8384215* ***http://members.aol.com/sokolowmus/****...write for free catalog*

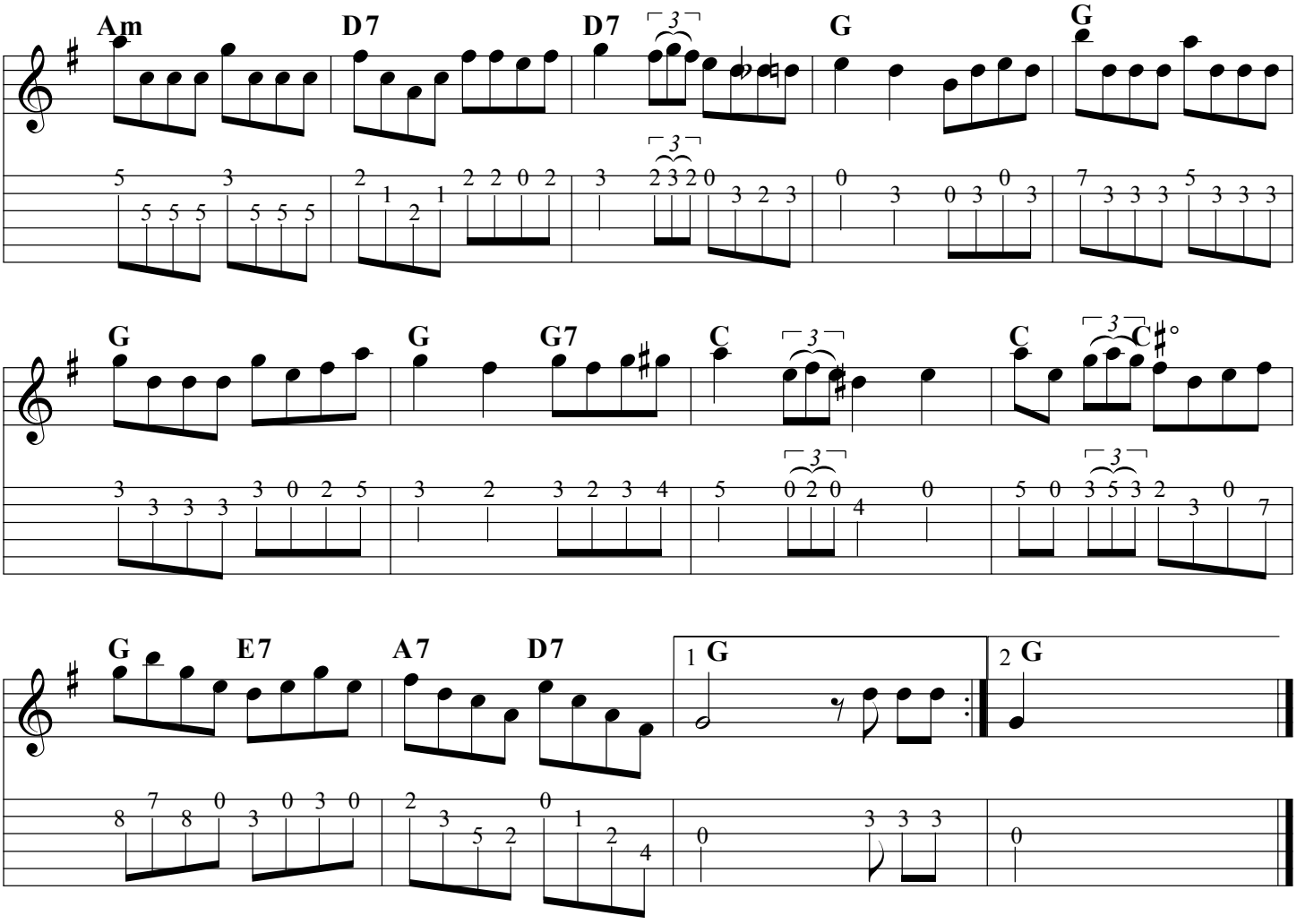
Jesse Polka

Arranged by Steve Kaufman

Jesse Polka (con't)



Jesse Polka (con't)



Flatpicking '99
is now Available! Call 800-413-8296

NASHVILLE FLATTOP

By Brad Davis

BRAD DAVIS IS ENDORSED BY SIT STRINGS/COLLINGS/MARTIN/GRETCH/FENDER/PEAVEY/THUNDERFUNK/GIPSON/ERNIE BALL/BAGGS/WILKINS GUITARS.

THAT LONESOME SOUND

I've been asked the question, "How do you get a lonesome sound on the guitar?" The first thing I answered was—"feel lonesome and you can play lonesome,"—but it's not that easy. To play something lonesome I would slow down the song and then choose a chord/key that would help it along. For example: "Lonesome Pie" is played in the key of D and the low E string is D-tuned to give a nice low D note to the playing field. The tempo is slow and usually few notes are best. This version of "Lonesome Pie" has more notes and licks than I would normally play, but I felt it necessary to include more licks and phrases so you guys could see what kind of licks will fit in a lonesome song solo. I would learn the note map first, the solo and then I would cut some fat from the phrase basket. Pick and choose some licks/phrases you like and throw the rest in your rainy day file. The more sparse the more lonesome it usually sounds. D happens to be a great key and the minor keys (Gminor, Eminor, Aminor to name a few) also sound very lonesome and sad. If you're observant you'll find many of these slow and bluesy licks are simply fast licks used in regular everyday flatpicking. They are just slowed down and stretched out! Starting a lonesome solo in the lower string register is also a good starting plan and can give you room to expand and stretch the solo giving it the ups and downs a good solo should have. Good luck with "Lonesome Pie"!

To receive a free catalog and to get on our *confidential* mailing list write to us or e-mail your info to: BDM Publishing / Box 890 / Madison, TN. 37116.
Email:bmpublishing@home.com
Or simply phone us at:615-262-5066

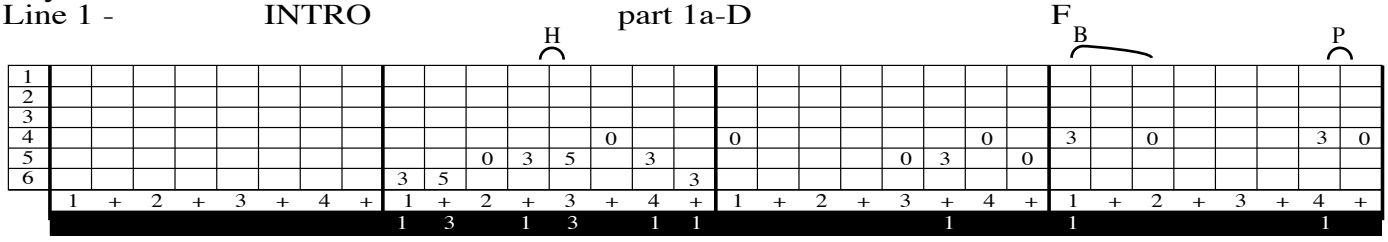
DON'T FORGET TO GET YOUR FREE LESSON AT: BDMPUBLISHING.COM (I will try and have a new lesson for Feb.)

LOOK FOR BRADS' BAND WHITE WATER ON TOUR

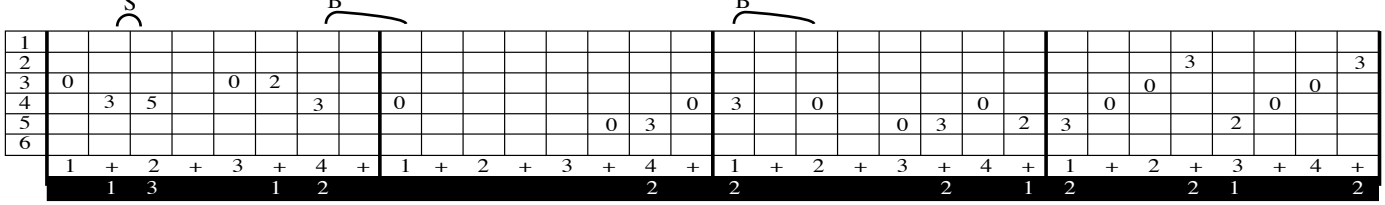
Lonesome Pie written by Brad Davis bdm/BMI

Key D

Line 1 - INTRO part 1a-D F



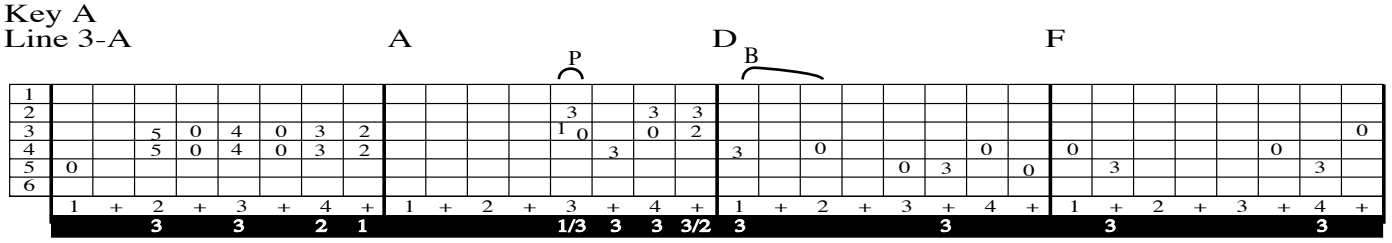
Line 2 -G D D C



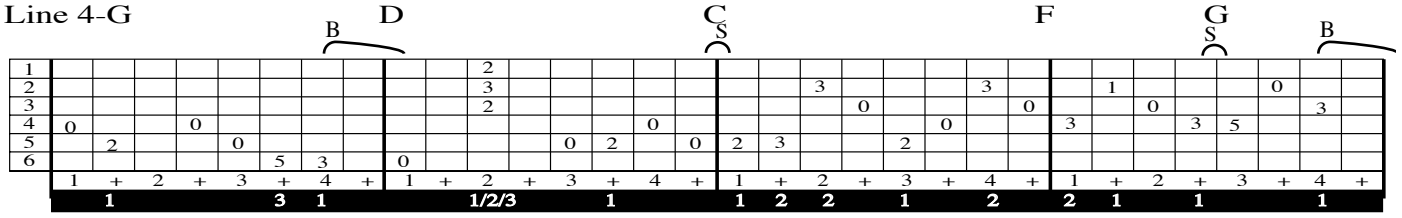
Lonesome Pie (con't)

Key A

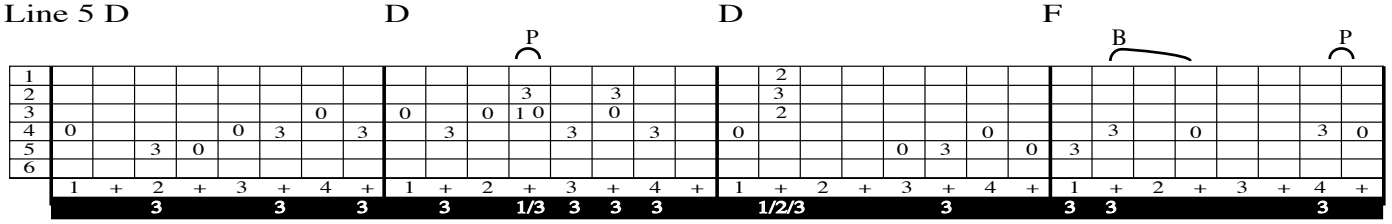
Line 3-A



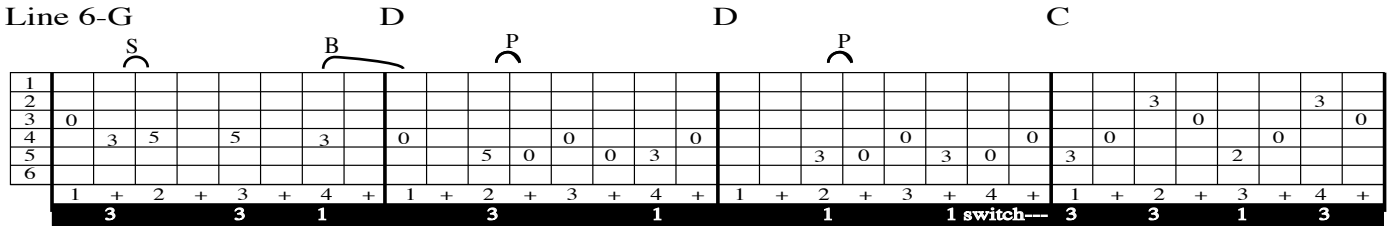
Line 4-G



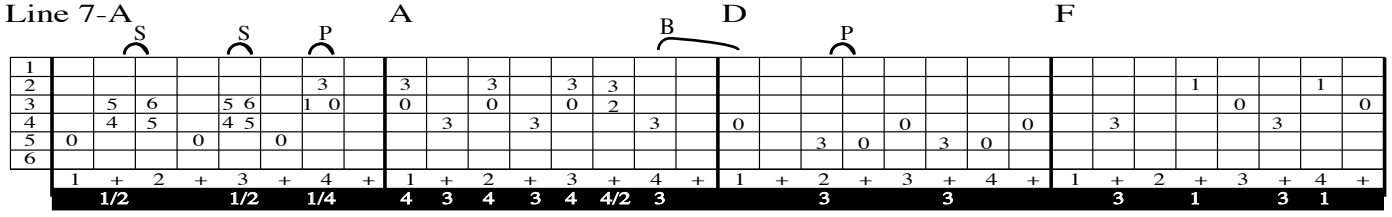
Line 5 D



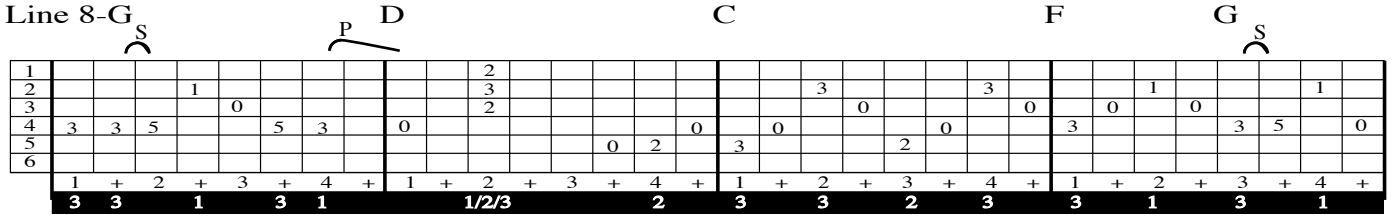
Line 6-G



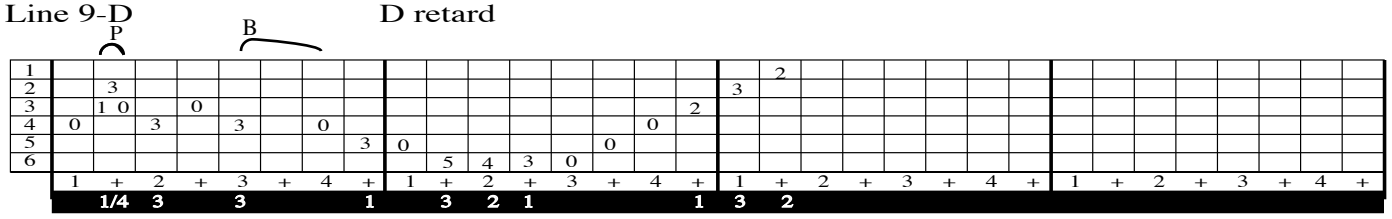
Line 7-A

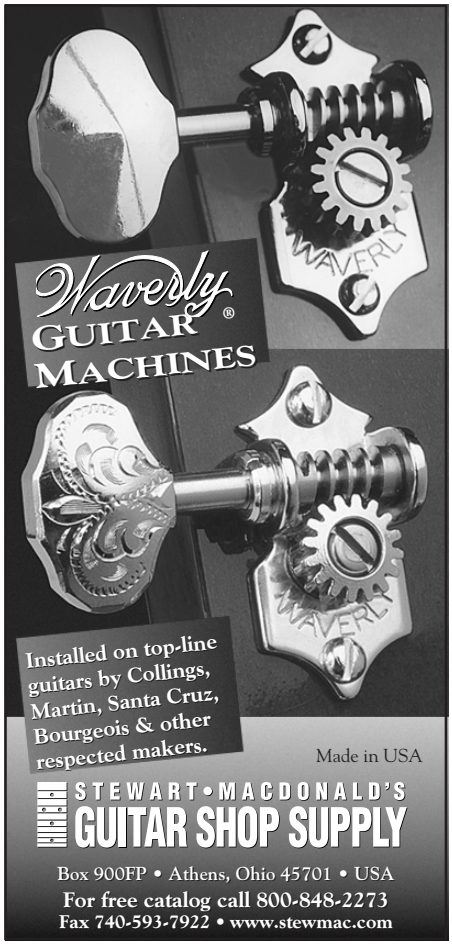


Line 8-G



Line 9-D




Waverly
GUITAR®
MACHINES
Installed on top-line guitars by Collings, Martin, Santa Cruz, Bourgeois & other respected makers.
Made in USA
STEWART•MACDONALD'S
GUITAR SHOP SUPPLY
Box 900FP • Athens, Ohio 45701 • USA
For free catalog call 800-848-2273
Fax 740-593-7922 • www.stewmac.com

Break Time

by Chris Jones

Lonesome Road Blues

The song "Lonesome Road Blues" is definitely one of the classics. What is the difference between "classic" and "overdone" you may ask? Classics are overdone songs that haven't been overdone that much recently, or they are overdone songs that I really like.

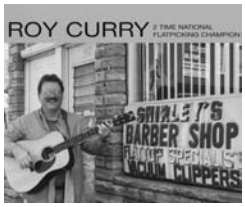
"Lonesome Road Blues" satisfies the second definition, if not the first. I included this in my new *Creating Guitar Solos For Banjo Instrumentals* (order now and you might receive a free set of used Ginsu Knives), although it's also a vocal tune—provided you, or someone nearby, is sing the words. It is sometimes also called "Going Down This Road Feeling Bad," and every now and then it's called "Love Me Tender" but with a different melody and lyrics.

But I digress. The point is that it's a good tune that makes for a good, traditional guitar break. There is nothing earth shattering or overly complex in this tab. It is influenced a little bit by the classic Earl Scruggs rendition, and I used some syncopation in the 3rd and 4th measures to give a hint of the banjo phrasing, without playing rolls (or installing a Huber tone ring in my guitar).

As I've said in a previous column, it is possible to give a flowing feel to a guitar break to a banjo tune without using crosspicking. Here I've used arpeggios in combination with some runs, plus some healthy spaces to give the music (and myself) a chance to breathe. There's even a good old Clarence-ism in the 9th measure, going into the C.

In the last issue, I dealt with "trail-offs,"and there's a good example of one at the end of this tune. Instead of letting the final melody note ring (the open G note at the beginning of measure 16) it is used as the beginning of a run which returns to that G a measure later. This is a lick that is usable in all sorts of songs ending on a G note (maybe even "Love me Tender"), and it makes a good "G-run" alternative in that spot.

ROY CURRY
Flat Top Specialist



"Put this CD on your 'must have' list."
— Bryan Kimsey
Flatpicking Guitar Magazine

1980 National Flatpicking Champion
1991 National Flatpicking Champion
1996 Merlefest Guitar Champion
Winner of over 40 other Contests
Guest Performer Kaufman Camp '97, '98, '99

Roy Curry plays Nashville Guitar Co. Instruments
for more info on the great guitars of Marty Lanham
visit the Nashville Guitar Company website
www.nashguitar.com

TO ORDER SEND $15 (postage paid) TO:
ROY CURRY
PO BOX 15163
CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415

Flatpicking Guitar Magazine
Storage Binders

High Quality, Durable, and Attractive

The perfect place to keep your back issues organized and protected

Call 800-413-8296 to Order

Key of A
Capo 2

Lonesome Road Blues

Arrnaged by Chris Jones

Visit
Flatpicking Guitar Magazine
on the
Web: www.flatpick.com

JAM TUNES

"Beaumont Rag"

In this issue's "Jam Tunes" column we are providing you with Travis Alltop's arrangement of the classic flatpick jam tune "Beaumont Rag." Travis was featured in Volume 3, Number 2 of this magazine and we also included his rendition of "Fickle Wind" on the *Flatpicking '99* CD.

Since we last visited with Travis he has landed the lead guitar job with Valerie Smith and Liberty Pike. If you have an opportunity to see this high energy band perform, don't miss it. It is a great show.

On the *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine* audio companion to this issue we decided to combine two of our featured artists and bring Roland White into the studio with Travis. Roland is featured this issue in the "Masters of Rhythm Guitar" column and so we have Roland backing up Travis on this tune. We also asked Roland to bring out his mandolin and jam on this tune with Travis. On the CD, you will hear Travis play the arrangement which is transcribed here at both fast and slow speeds. Then we let Travis stretch out a bit on the jam with Roland. He provides some great variations on this tune. Those of you with a good ear can pick them out from the CD. For those of you who don't think you have a good ear, go ahead and try to pick out Travis' variations anyway, it will be a good step in the direction of developing a good ear.

Have fun with "Beaumont Rag."

Transcribed by Brad Davis

Beaumont Rag

Arranged by Travis Alltop

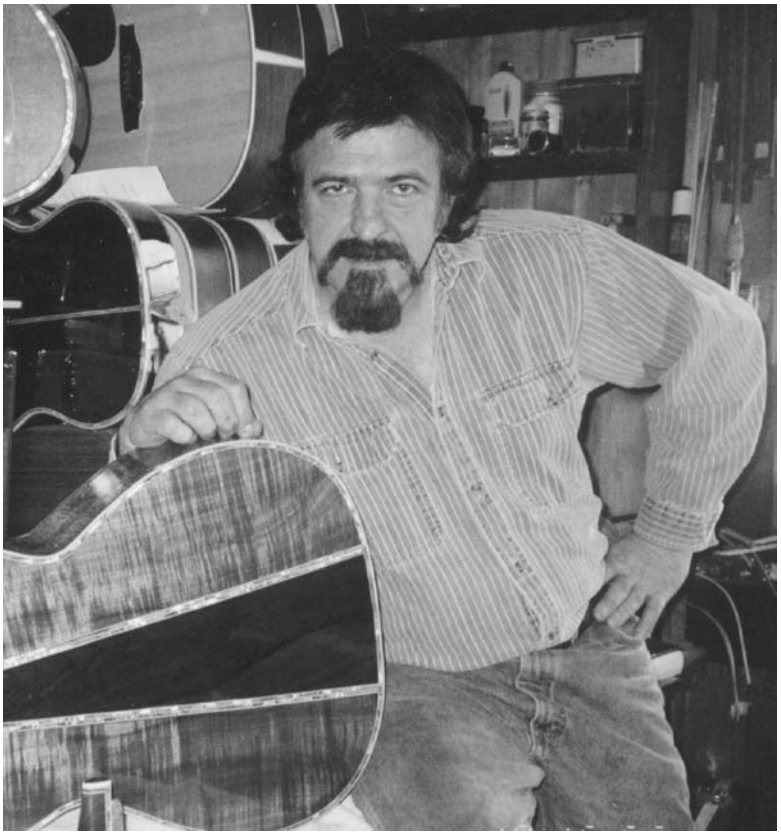
Beaumont Rag (con't)

Foley Guitars

by
Ron Baumann

What do Bill Monroe, George Strait, George Jones, Joe Diffie, Eddie Raven, Charlie Daniels, and John Pearse have in common? Answer: They are but a few in a long list of professional clients of Ed Foley, maker of high quality acoustic guitars.

I first became aware of Foley Guitars when I saw George Strait and The Ace in the Hole Band perform on a TV broadcast of the Country Music Awards in 1997. Both George and his guitarist, David Anthony, were playing acoustic guitars that were some of the most distinctive I had ever seen. Always interested in the brands of guitars used by the pros, I was curious to know who made those guitars with the distinctive steer skull inlay in the headstock. I would have to wait a year for the answer.



Luthier Ed Foley

My next encounter with Foley Guitars occurred in my local guitar store. Through good fortune, I stumbled upon a newly arrived pre-owned guitar. The guitar's original owner had passed away, and the guitar was being offered for sale for the very first time. To my astonishment, on the headstock was the very same steer skull inlay that I had observed on TV one year before! I requested that the store owner allow me to replace the ancient strings that were on the guitar. When I strummed the guitar with the new strings, it almost blew the windows out of the store! I bought the guitar on the spot, then ran out the door before the owner could change his mind.

Inside the guitar were a serial number and signature of its maker, E.A. Foley. The mystery was unfolding. But it was not until I was freelancing on harmonica with New Jersey acoustic blues and ragtime fingerpicker, Rich DiPaolo and his band, The Booglerizers, did the final piece of the puzzle fall into place. That night, Rich was debuting his new pride and joy—a brand new Engelmann/rosewood/koa OM size guitar which also had that unforgettable steer skull inlay on the headstock. The guitar was of exquisite beauty and had an awesome sound. Rich showed me a Foley Guitars information packet which contained a slew of letters from Mr. Foley's clients thanking Ed for what he had done for them. I was astounded by the sheer number of Ed Foley's professional clients, and their outrageous comments.

Founder of Groove Tubes Electronics, Aspen Pittman, called Foley Guitars "by far the best sounding guitars on the planet!" Bill Monroe said, "I've heard a lot of guitars in my life, as you can imagine. But when I heard that Foley, I had to have one!" John Pearse, of Pearse Guitar Strings fame, said that no guitar he owns compares, in tone or looks, to his two Foleys! Merle Haggard's lead guitarist, Redd Volkaert, said that his Foley OM "eats his other guitars alive!" The accolades went on and on. Nashville, Los Angeles, and New York studio pros were using them and praising them in superlative terms. I was ashamed that I had been so unaware.

It turns out that the luthier, Ed Foley, is a native of my homestate—New Jersey. When my friend, Rich, invited me to accompany him the next day to Ed Foley's workshop, I was overjoyed. What follows are a few excerpts from my conversation with what one of the pros called, "The master guitar maker of the future."

Ed, how did you come to start making guitars?

Working with wood is a family tradition. My background is in woodcarving, woodworking, and restoring antique furniture. A tour of the Martin factory inspired me to make my first guitar. I sold it when someone made me an offer I couldn't refuse. Then I made another, and from there it just snowballed.

I was floored by the comments of the pros who play your guitars. They're saying that your guitars are the best looking, best sounding guitars made today, as well as being very easy to play. How do you do it?

I use only the best materials and personally hand pick the best woods. Choosing and voicing the top are important aspects in achieving the sound I want. I go right to (famed Tennessee luthier and supplier) Ted Davis' house to get my wood. I go through thousands of tops and may only choose three or four percent of the tops I test. I won't use a top unless it rings for five seconds when I tap it. They are a quarter inch thick—that's pretty good for a quarter inch piece of wood! Then during construction, I individually tune and voice the woods, and work with a lot of care.

Because I do all the work myself, I have total control over the finished product.

How many different models do you make?

I work with my clients to make anything conceivable; but if a guitar that I'm building isn't a custom order, I'll usually build one of the standard size dreadnoughts, OMs, jumbos, and cutaways are popular.

How long does it take for you to make one guitar, and how many guitars do you make a year?

Those are some of the most common questions at the guitar shows, yet I still don't know how many hours I put into a single guitar. I work on several guitars at a time, and each one is unique. Construction usually takes several months from start to finish—but I once made a guitar in a week for a friend who wanted a bare-bones guitar with one coat of lacquer (laughs)! I make about fifteen guitars a year, and right now I'm working on guitar numbers in the 190s.

How do you achieve the beautiful finish that your guitars are known for?

More important than the type of lacquer used, is that the finished coat be as thin as possible. I apply five separate coats of lacquer, sanding in between each coat. And I don't use grain filler. Instead, I use a clear sealer that enables you to look deep into the grain. Although the finish is thin, it looks much deeper than it actually is.

Is a new Foley Guitar covered by a warranty?

All of my guitars are covered by a five year transferable warranty.

There has been a lot of talk lately on the Internet discussion list, Flatpick-L, about the merits of the "tongue depressor" brace located under the top, perpendicular to the fingerboard. Some guitar "hot-rodders" are removing them from existing guitars to improve the sound. What do you feel about this brace?

I don't use this brace in my guitars. Neither do the vintage re-issue Martins because they didn't exist in their pre-war guitars. And I've never encountered the cracking problem that this brace was supposedly created to address.

Anything else special about your braces?

I DO use a special brace pattern, but it's based on the basic pre-war type that Martin originated. I hand-carve and tune each brace to compliment each individual top. My back braces are often thin and high, and flexible enough to be rung like a washcloth. But they don't move at all in this direction (demonstrates by pushing against the back of a brace). Although they're strong, they're very flexible and allow a lot of movement in the top and back. In fact, sometimes people pick up my guitars at shows, and say, "Wow, this guitar is vibrating already!"

What materials do you use for nuts and saddles?

I always use unbleached bone, unless otherwise specified. I feel unbleached bone is stronger than bleached, and I like the color too.

What kind of bindings do you use?

I think ivoroid and tortoise bindings are the most beautiful way to protect the edges from damage. I don't think wood bindings look quite as good, and they can even crack if they take a hard hit.

What scale lengths do you employ?

I usually use a long scale (25.4 inches). A long scale positions the bridge further into the lower bout; I think that improves the sound. Short scales (24.9 inches) certainly have their place, and if a player wants a short scale guitar, I'm happy to oblige.

What type of wood do you use for your bridge plates?

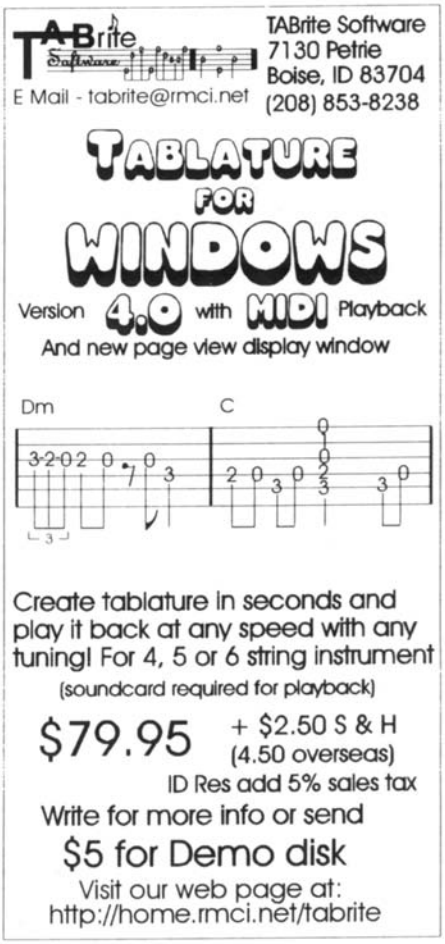
I've used maple bridge plates in most of my guitars, and I've improved the standard shape to prevent it from touching the cross brace. Right now I'm making six guitars with Brazilian Rosewood bridge plates.

With all the tremendous success you've had in the past using maple bridge plates, why would you use a different type of wood now?

I want to hear the difference they make in the sound of my guitars. I'll probably use both in the future. I try to make my guitars have beautiful voices, not just "a good sound."

What are some of your favorite woods?

Koa sides and back with a Brazilian



Bill Monroe picking his Foley Guitar

wedge down the center is one of my favorites. The combination of the dense, bright sounding Rosewood with the woody sounding Koa creates a terrific sound. For tops, I like Adirondack or stiff Engelmann spruce, depending on the type of player. Generally, Engelmann seems to better suit players who may not play quite as hard; it's also the choice of most fingerpickers. A hard player tends to bring out the best in Adirondack.

What kind of electronic pickups do you prefer to install in your guitars?

I prefer not to install any (laughs)! If a client wants a pickup, I'll install one, but I don't have a preference. My focus is in the creation of a great sounding acoustic guitar. I WILL say that I prefer not to use the strip types that lay under saddle, because I don't like to interfere with the acoustic quality of the sound going from the saddle to the bridge.

What frets do you prefer?

That's the player's choice, but I like a tall thin fret because I think they have a cleaner sound. Tall frets also last longer, and they require only a light touch when playing. A thin fret may not last quite as long as a wide fret, but my objective isn't to make guitars that are able to survive a train wreck. I make 'em to sound good. Sometimes I work harden frets before installation, to increase longevity. I'm also looking into a cold temperature treatment called cryogenics. It's a process used by rifle makers to harden gun barrels.

What width neck do you use?

Because neck width preferences vary from player to player, I'll make whatever width neck the client feels comfortable playing, from 1 9/16 to a full two inches at the nut. The way I shape the neck though, results in easy playability, regardless of width.

Which tuning machine is your favorite?

I like Schallers. They make a precision tuner at a reasonable price.

How do you join your necks to the bodies?

I use a traditional dovetail joint.

What kinds of glues do you use?

A lot of my instruments are used by entertainers, and are transported on tour buses in the hot luggage compartments, where excessive heat can be a problem. So for additional durability I use Titebond. Titebond makes it tough if I ever have to take the guitar apart for repairs, but it stands up to that kind of abuse.

The pros are saying that your guitars sound fantastic right out of the box. Do they sound even better after being played a while? In other words, how long does it take for the sound of your guitars to "open up"?

I try to make 'em so they sound great right away, but there are two reasons why a guitar sounds better after a few months. It's true that the sound improves with playing as the wood naturally ages. But it's also because as the player gets to know the guitar, his technique adjusts to the guitar—driving it better, achieving better tone and volume.

Your signature steer skull in the headstock is a hand-carved inlay made of real ivory. Since the sale of elephant ivory is prohibited, what is your source of this ivory?

I obtain my supply of this ivory from keys that I remove from old, discarded pianos. Incidentally, I've encountered a few players at guitar shows who felt that the steer skull might connote a "cowboy guitar." If a client prefers, I can replace the steer skull inlay with a different style, one that says, "Foley," in an attractive script lettering.

Personally, I think the ivory skull looks great. What with the tremendous recognition of all the existing Foley guitars with the steer skull headstock, that would be one change I'd never request. What is your current lead time and what is the base price of your guitars?

I have about a year backlog. Base price is $2750.

Considering the sound, not to mention the fact that your guitars are handmade of the best materials and craftsmanship available, that seems relatively inexpensive. How do you keep the prices down?

Almost all of my advertising has been word-of-mouth. For me, guitar making is a labor of love, and I want to get my guitars into the hands of the players, rather than price them out of reach.

Since your guitars are made of the same materials as the other brands of guitars, what accounts for that outrageous sound your guitars are known for?

The choice of woods is critical—you simply won't get this quality of wood in a mass produced guitar. But it's got to be a combination of everything involved —the tuning of the braces; the voicing of the top and back; the precise angle of the neck-to-body joint; nut and saddle height; even the finish—all these things make important contributions to the each guitar's unique voice. You ask a lot of questions—are you ready to order yet ? (laughs)

For more information, contact : E.A. Foley Box 646 Andover, NJ 07821 phone 973-786-6077 fax 973-786-5627

THE O-ZONE

by Orrin Star

Shenadoah Falls

"Shenadoah Falls" is a beautiful fiddle tune frequently heard at New England contra dances.

Its pedigree remains something of a mystery. It was first recorded by Vermont fiddler Pete Sutherland, who popularized it in traditional fiddle circles. I once heard that he had written it as a take-off of Bill Monroe's "Shenandoah Breakdown" (which is actually not implausible given the nearly identical chords in the A-parts of both). But this is not so: he actually learned it from a West Coast fiddler named Carol Robinson. Yet there's a rub: she later claimed—contrary to his memory—that "Shenandoah Falls" wasn't the tune's actual name.

So its origins remain a conundrum within an enigma .

No matter—it's a wonderful tune. I recorded it in 1988 on my *Fun Songs & Fancy Pickin'* Flying Fish album and still take great pleasure in flatpicking it.

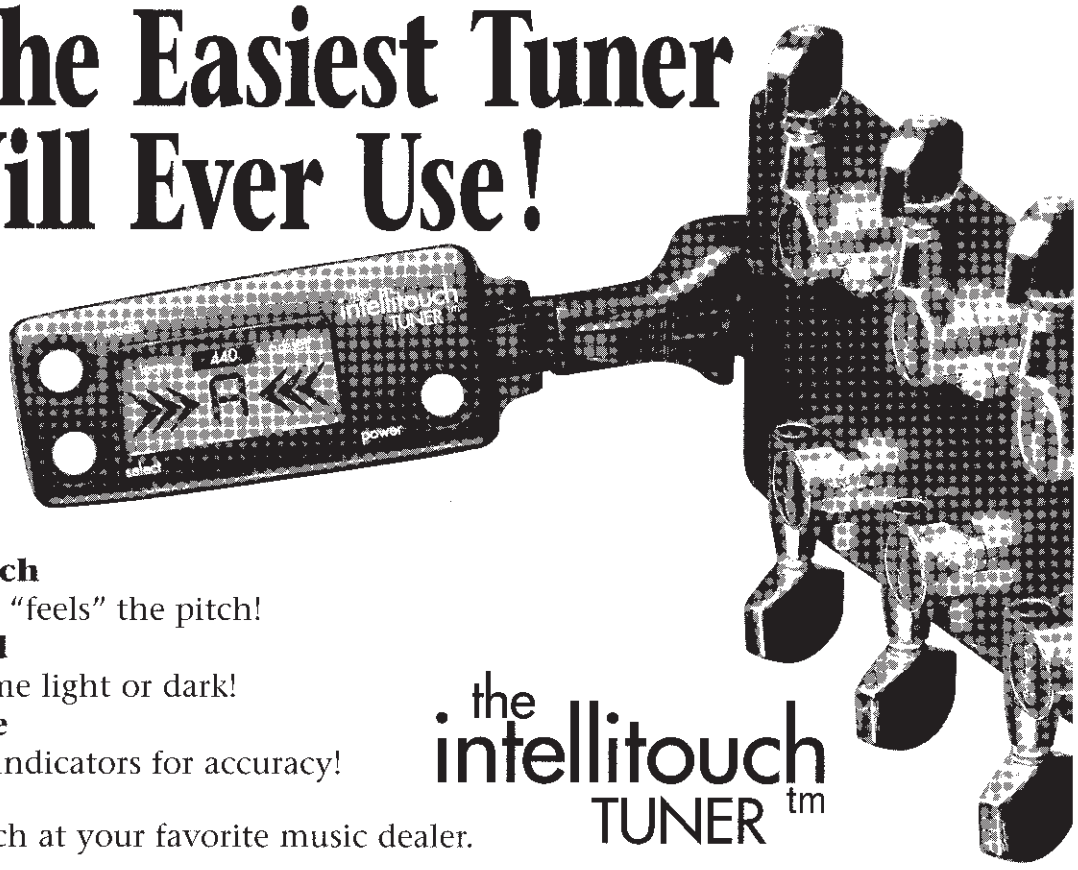
Technique-wise, there are two notable elements at play here: rest strokes and double-stops.

Rest strokes are the power "down" strokes that involve angling your pick forward, pushing through the string you're hitting, and snapping to rest on the string below. They are indicated by the > sign in the tab, and they really make the tune come alive.

"Double-stop" is a term taken from fiddling that describes melodic moves in which you play two notes together in harmony. The 'B' part of this tune is full of them.

Lastly, note that the third pair of eight notes in measure 16 consists of a strum followed by an individual note—a cool down-up pairing that you don't see very often.

Meet the Easiest Tuner You Will Ever Use!



A. Easy to Attach
Just clip on! It "feels" the pitch!

B. Easy to Read
Even in extreme light or dark!

C. Easy to Tune
Simple arrow indicators for accuracy!

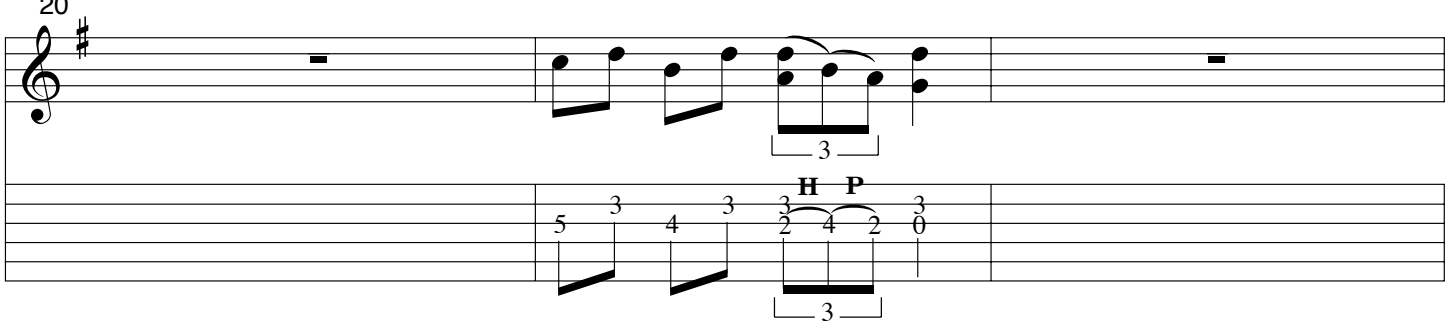
the intellitouch TUNER tm

Ask for Intellitouch at your favorite music dealer.

Shenadoah Falls

Arranged by Orrin Star

Variation for Measure 14



Cajun Flatpicking "Jole Blonde"

by Dix Bruce

Jole Blonde

Before we get into this column's main subject, the Cajun standard "Jole Blonde," I wanted to mention a slight typo we discovered in the last column. It's in the paragraph that describes how Maybelle Carter retuned her guitar to accommodate the Carter Family's vocal range while still allowing her to play the guitar in the keys of G and C. The sentence in question should read: "Lowering the tuning on the guitar by 1/2 step results in the key of F#, one whole step would yield the key of F, a step and a half would make the key of E"(not A as printed). I bet you already figured that out!

I spent most of the 1990s working in the production department of Arhoolie Records. Arhoolie has long been known for releasing a wonderful variety of powerful regional musics including Blues, Tex-Mex, Zydeco, Cajun, and many more.

I was exposed to everything Arhoolie had to offer as music played constantly while we re-edited master tapes, checked test CDs, and previewed new projects. It was a great education for me and over the course of nearly nine years I discovered countless songs, artists, and whole genres of music previously unknown to me that I have since incorporated into my own listening and playing repertoires.

I found Louisiana Cajun music to be especially interesting and enjoyable. Cajun music's liberal use of fiddle and guitar along with accordion in a basic string band format made it an easy transition from the more familiar old time country and bluegrass styles that I knew so well. The rhythm is different—much more dance oriented—and infectious. The singing is in French and the passion of the performances I heard made it impossible to ignore.

I first heard Michael Doucet and Beausoleil early in my Arhoolie days. They have several fine CDs on the label. While their music is rooted solidly in the Cajun tradition (they perform just about every one of the classic Cajun tunes) Beausoleil has a modern, energetic sound that has made it the most popular Cajun band in the world. The fine guitar playing of David Doucet is a special treat, especially to readers of this magazine. In addition to performing on all the Beausoleil CDs, David also has two solo CDs on the Rounder label. David's a wonderful flat picker who plays with great taste and soul.

At Arhoolie I also discovered the Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band, Nathan Abshire, Cheese Reed, Harry Choates, Amede Ardoin, and many other Cajun greats. Arhoolie's expansive Cajun anthologies and collections present a wide cross-section of the Cajun music world. If you're interested in string band music, check out "Cajun String Bands" (CD 7014) or one of my favorites, The Hackberry Ramblers "Jole Blonde." (CD 399).

"Jole Blonde" is one of the greatest hits of Cajun music. It's an old folk melody, a waltz, that's evolved over the years and today is played on a variety of instruments, in several different keys, with lyric and melodic variations aplenty, wherever Cajun musicians gather.

The version below includes two solos. The first is a transcription of the guitar solo from the CD I mentioned above, The Hackberry Ramblers "Jole Blonde." It's a delightfully melodic solo, probably by Lennis Sonnier. I love the melodic runs he put in the solo. They flow so naturally and connect the different phrases so well. The second solo is one I put together using a few licks from the first solo along with melodic fragments from different versions I've heard over the years. When I learn a new tune, I always try to have at least a couple of solos worked up so I have a choice of solos to play at a jam session.

The Hackberry Ramblers play this version of "Jole Blonde" in the key of A. We'll be playing it out of the key of G capoed at the second fret. The hammers and pulls add a little of the rhythmic flavor of Cajun fiddling to the guitar solo and the licks in M7, 14 & 15 almost sound like boogie woogie riffs. The double stop slide in M 16 is another guitar move that borrows from that typical Cajun fiddle sound.

The second solo is closely related to the first but includes some different technical moves. In M 19 & 27 you'll find a couple of triplets that I lifted from Luderin Darnonne's fiddle solos. If you're not familiar with them, triplets can be confusing.

To understand triplets, you need to know how to count them. When we count a full 3/4 measure of quarter notes we'd think or say "One-Two-Three." The same measure with all eighth notes would be "One and-Two and-Three and." The same 3/4 measure with triplet eighth notes would be "One two-three, Two-two-three, Three-two-three" where instead of playing two eighth notes over every quarter note, we play three.

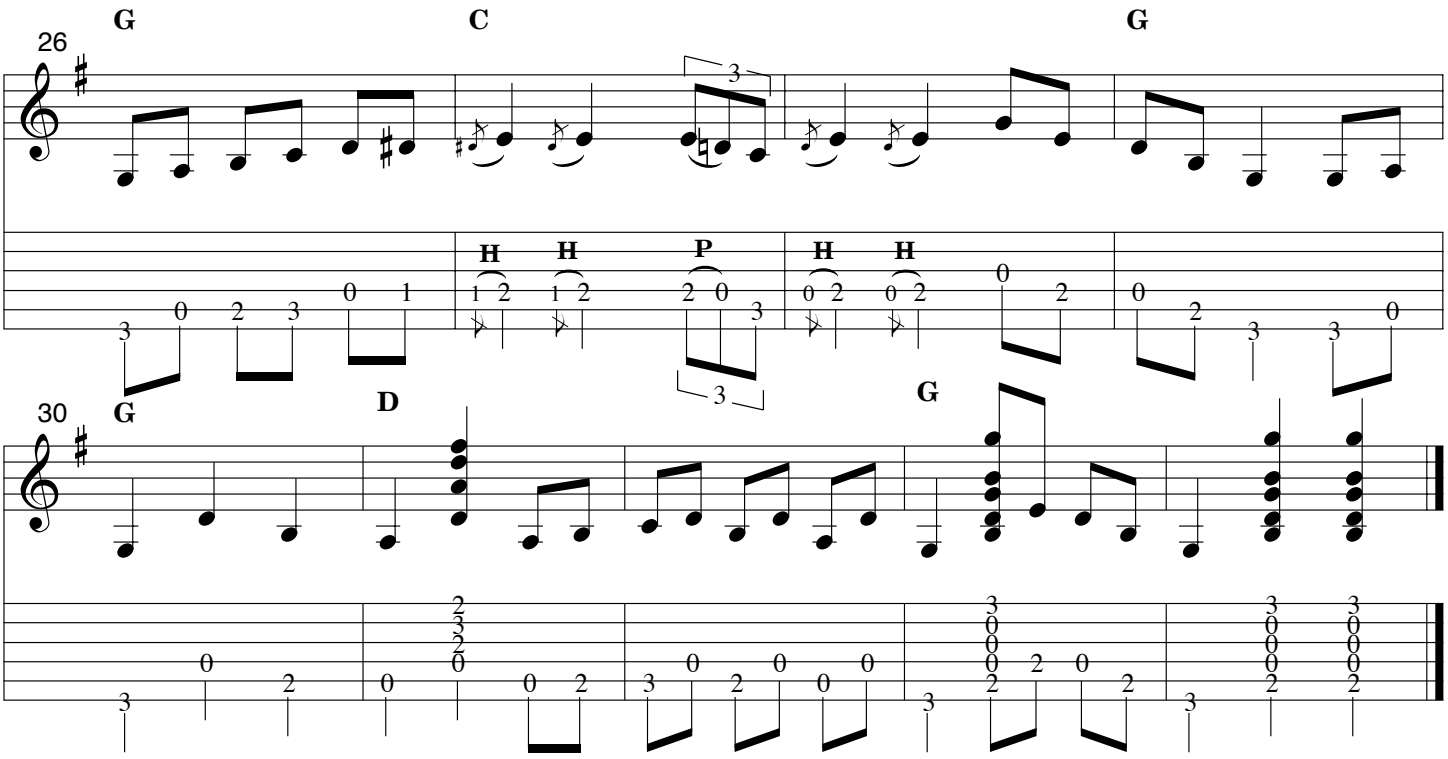
I know you'll find "Jole Blonde" to be a useful addition to your repertoire. It's a well-known tune with a recognizable Cajun groove and you'll find that all types of audiences will respond to it. If you would like to learn more about Cajun music, request a catalog from Arhoolie, 10341 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530 (www.arhoolie.com).

About the Author: Dix Bruce writes about and plays a variety of musical styles from traditional American to big band swing to modern folk and country. He has authored over thirty instructional projects for Mel Bay Publications. His most recent CDs are *My Folk Heart*, a solo effort, and his new duo project with Jim Nunally *The Way Things Are*. Dan Miller considers him a close personal friend. Dix has just completed two instructional videos scheduled for Spring 2000 release for Stefan Grossman's Guitar Workshop entitled *Basic Swing Guitar* and *Basic Country Flatpicking Guitar*. All of Dix's books, CDs and video are available through Musix, PO Box 231005, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 , Toll Free: 1-877-219-0441. e-mail: Musix1@ aol.com.

Jole Blonde

Recorded Source: Arhoolie 399 #24
Transcribed by Dix Bruce

Jole Blonde (con't)



Mel Bay Publications . . .

FLATPICKING at its Best!

Winfield Winners...Flatpicking Champions/Live from Steve Kaufman's Flatpicking Kamp Video

This video features these eight amazing National Winfield Flatpicking Champions: Stephen Bennett (1987), Mark Cosgrove (1995), Roy Curry (1980 & 1991), Steve Kaufman (1978, 1984, & 1986), Robin Kessinger (1985), Cody Kilby (1998), Allen Shadd (1997), and Mike Whitehead (1994). This video captures them at Steve Kaufman's world renowned Flatpicking Kamp performing: *Billy in the Lowground* (All); *Cuckoo's Nest* (Mark C., Steve K., Allen S., Mike W., Robin K.,); *Redwing* (Mike W., Steve K., Roy C.); *Temperance Reel* (All); *Back Up and Push* (Steve K., Roy C., Allen S.,); *Salt Creek/Red Haired Boy* (All); *Little Rock Getaway* (Robin K., Steve K., Stephen B., Allen S.); *Forked Deer* (All); *Blackberry Blossom* (All); *East Tennessee Blues* (Steve K., Robin K., Stephen B., Allen S.); *Bill Cheatham* (All); and *Beaumont Rag/Encore* (All). **76-minute Video** (98340VX) $29.95.

Flatpicking Gospel Tunes

By William Bay. This book/CD combo presents flatpicking arrangements of inspirational tunes written in standard notation and tablature, also included for each song is a leadsheet arrangement with lyrics, chord symbols and fretboard diagrams for reference. 32 pages. **Book/CD set** (98589BCD) $9.95.

Classics for Flatpicking Guitar

By William Bay. Presents 21 classical pieces arranged for flatpicking guitar plus a few modern flatpicking originals in the classical style. Includes works by J. S. Bach, Dowland, Handel, Krieger, Mouret, Playford, Praetorius, Quantz, Rameau, Sanz, and St. Jacome, as well as music by two anonymous Renaissance lutenists– 21 pieces total. Written in notation and tablature with fingering and suggested guitar chords when appropriate. 32 pages. **Book/CD set** (98056BCD) $9.95.

Flatpicking Tunes for 12-String Guitar

By William Bay. Favorite fiddle tunes expertly arranged for 12-string guitar. Presents Irish, French Canadian, Scottish, American, and traditional set dances, ballads, jigs, hornpipes, reels, and fiddle tunes. Written in standard notation and tablature. 48 pages. **Book/CD set** (98365BCD) $17.95.

– Publishing the finest in music for over 50 years! –

Please add $6.00 for shipping and handling.

MEL BAY PUBLICATIONS, INC.

P.O. Box 66 • Pacific, MO 63069 • **1-800-8-MEL BAY** (1-800-863-5229) • **FAX (636) 257-5062**

Visit us on the Web at www.melbay.com • e-mail us at email@melbay.com

Music Theory: Mastering the Fingerboard

Technical Studies for Flatpickers. Alternate and painful fingerings...

by Michel A. Maddux

Hello friends! Here is the second installment of the first position major scales. You will recall from the previous issue that we presented the first 6 (of the 12 chromatic) scales in first position, from G up to C major. We then presented the A section (first part) of the traditional fiddle tune "Forked Deer" in the keys of C and G.

For this time, we will study the remaining 6 first position major scales (C# through F#), and complete the study of "Forked Deer" in C and G.

As always, when you play through these exercises I want you to focus on a steady right hand movement. Make certain that each note rings out clearly, with good tone. You should set the metronome at the speed that you can play through the entire exercise without faltering. Remember, Quality before Quantity!

If a particular scale pattern is already familiar to you, or seems easier, then increase the metronome speed. Challenge yourself! The ultimate goal is to be able to play these forms perfectly at any speed, from the very slowest to the very fastest. Keep reviewing everything. Every lesson is important.

Putting It All Together:

The closed position forms (meaning, there are no open strings in the form) can be moved to any position. They occur for the first time on the guitar in first position. Some of the other forms you will recognize as forms that we've studied, but in first position they use an open string. I want you to think about which forms are closed, and therefore could be moved to another position. The most important thing to realize about this study is this: All 12 chromatic scale forms occur in first position. In fact, all 12 chromatic scale forms can be played in EVERY position on the fingerboard. Think about that for a moment. That means that you can play in any key, anywhere on the neck.

Clearly, some forms are easier to play in certain positions. You will find that licks and positions seem to go together. That is why it is important to try to play tunes in different keys, and in different positions. Experiment. Try to play any of the exercises or tunes in any key, in any position.

How to Practice:

Remember to break the exercises down into sections that can be mastered. Keep the right hand DUDU constant with the metronome, and accent the first of each group of 4 notes.

Notes on C# Major: This form is the same one that we use playing up the neck in G, F, D, and is the same as C Major, first position, except that instead of beginning on the C, third fret, it begins on the C#, fourth fret.

Notes on D Major: Because I presented the complete two octave D Major form in the previous article on range extension, the second form shows an example of an exercise in D Major that remains entirely in first position. Note also that because you're playing this from in 2nd position, the previous form is also under your fingers for D, and you should practice both forms of D in 2nd position.

Notes on Eb Major: Most of the time you would choose to use the C# form in third position, or the forms that occur in 5th, 8th, 10th, 11th, and with a cutaway, 13th position, for the Eb. Because of this, I'm showing a one octave Eb Major, followed by an exercise in Eb that uses all 6 strings in first position. Note that at the point you slide the little finger to the 6th fret, you may choose to descend using the C# form, instead of returning to the first position.

Notes of E Major: E Major is one of three first position forms (F and F# are the other two) that provides a complete two octave scale without a hand position shift.

Notes on F# Major: This is a very useful form. Note that it covers two complete octaves without a hand position shift. Note also that it is completely closed, therefore can be moved to any position on the fingerboard, and used for music in any key. Try it. Put your second finger on the sixth string on any note, and play the scale.

Now let's finish the work that we started last time with "Forked Deer." We're playing the tune in two different keys, C and G. Here is the B section (the second part) in the key of C.

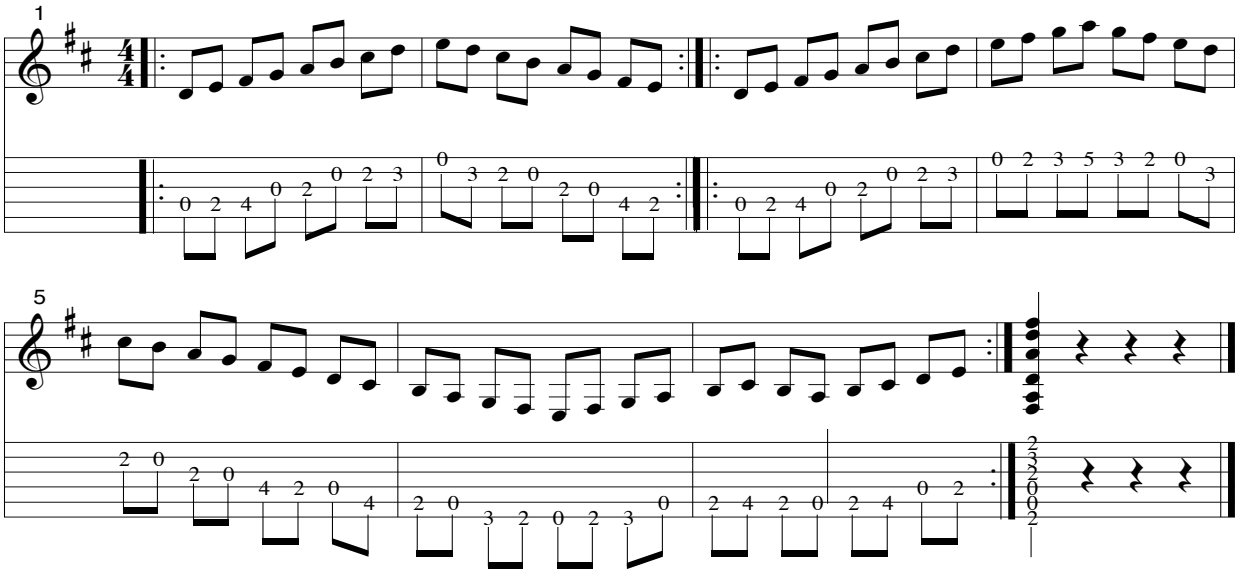
That's enough for this time. Have fun and keep on pickin'!

About the Author:

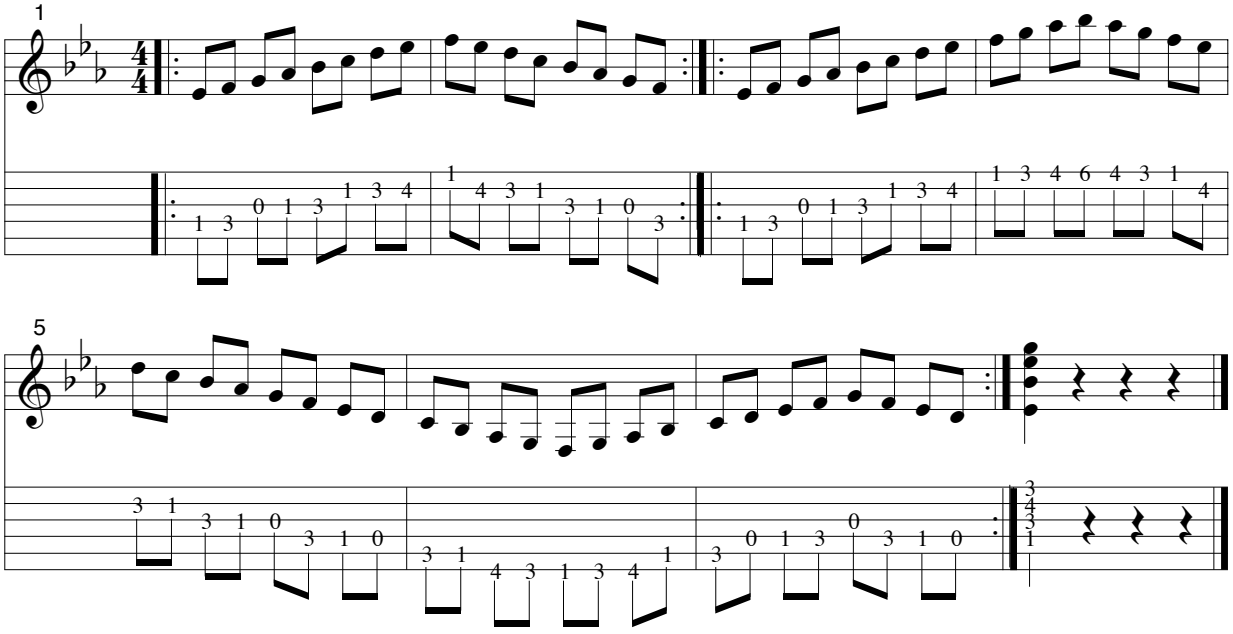
Mike Maddux has been flatpicking since 1981. He performs regularly in Colorado Springs and the western United States with his wife Bertye, and "The Mike and Bertye Maddux Band." In 1995 he was awarded third place honors at the prestigious National Flatpicking Championship in Winfield, Kansas. His CD, "OL Banjo," is available through Flatpicking Guitar Magazine. *Please contact him with questions or comments in care of this magazine.*

C# (Db) Major first position. Repeat 8-16 times without stopping:

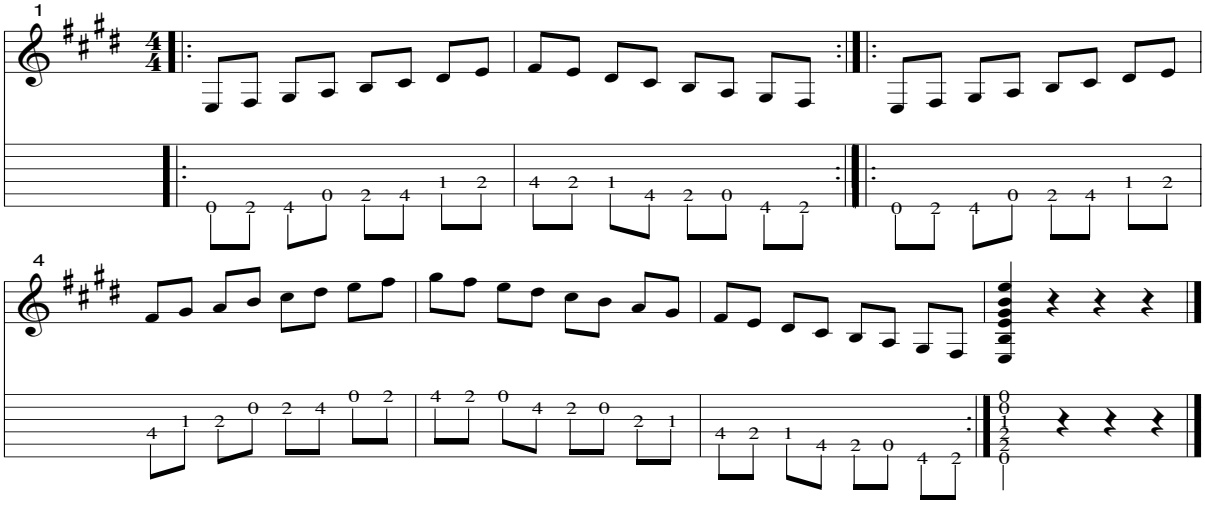
D Major first position. Repeat 8-16 times without stopping:



Eb Major. Repeat 8-16 times without stopping:

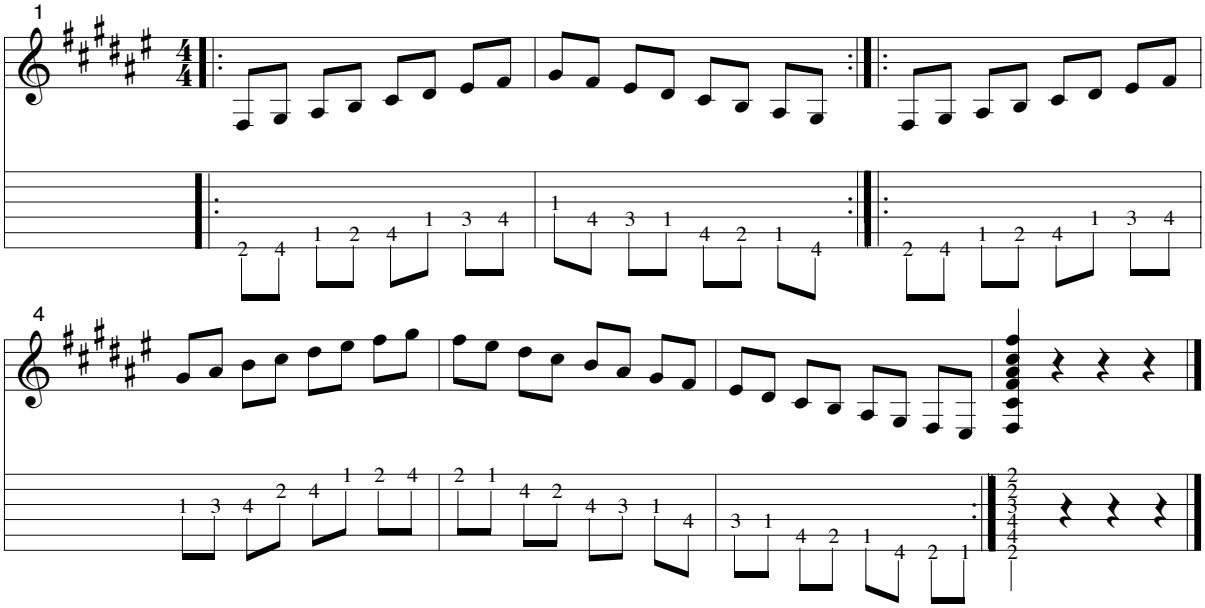


E Major. Repeat 8-16 times without stopping:

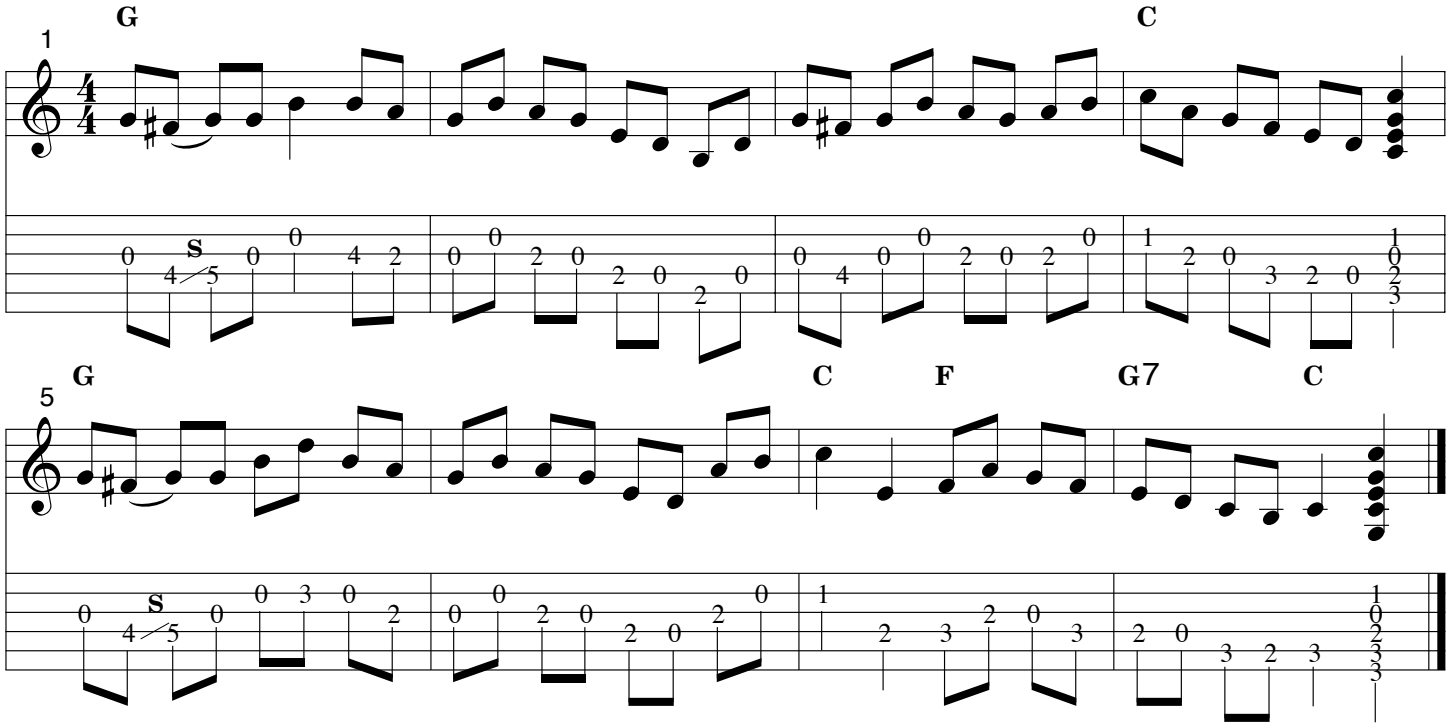


F Major. Repeat 8-16 times without stopping:

F# Major. Repeat 8-16 times without stopping:



Forked Deer - B Section: Key of C Traditional: Arrangement by Mike Maddux

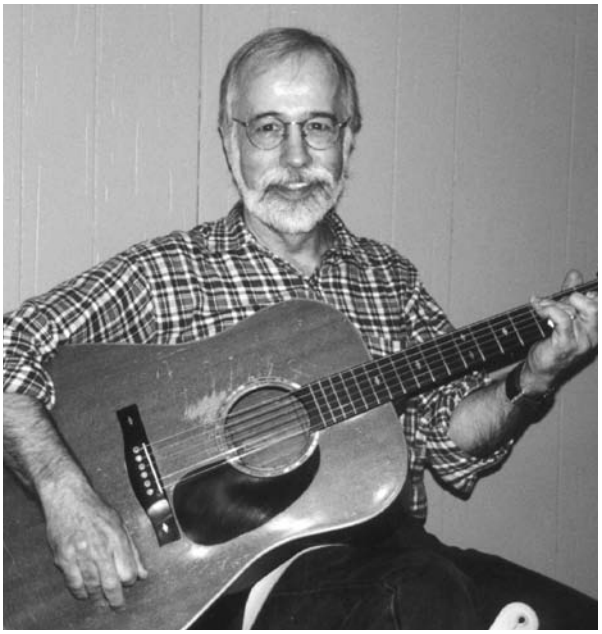


Forked Deer - B Section: Key of G Traditional: Arrangement by Mike Maddux

Masters of Rhythm Guitar:

Roland White

by Dan Miller



Roland White with the Whitebook guitar which was owned by Clarence

Roland White is impressive. First there is the career: He was the motivating force behind the formation of his family's band, which included his sister Joanne and his brothers Clarance and Eric. When Joann dropped out to get married, Roland, Clarence, and Eric continued as The Country Boys. Later Billy Ray Latham and LeRoy McNees were added to the group and, upon release of their first album, the name of the band was changed to the Kentucky Colonels—one of the most influential bands in bluegrass music history. After the Colonels went their separate ways, Roland moved on to play guitar with Bill Monroe for nearly two years. He left that job to play mandolin with Lester Flatt and the Nashville Grass. After playing with Flatt for four years, Roland reunited with his brothers and went back on the road as the New Kentucky Colonels until Clarence's tragic death in 1973. He then picked up his guitar again and joined Alan Munde, Byron Berline, and Roger Bush in Country Gazette and stayed with that band, in its various confingurations, for 13 years. In 1989 Roland joined the Nashville Bluegrass Band as the mandolin player and still holds that position today. Wow!—The Kentucky Colonels, Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys, Lester Flatt and the Nashville Grass, The New Kentucky Colonels, Country Gazette, and the Nashville Bluegrass Band—very impressive.

As impressive as Roland's career in bluegrass music has been, the man himself is even more impressive: his knowledge, his attitude, his outlook, his congeniality and his willingness to share what he knows with others overshadow his great career accomplishments. More than a performer, he is a mentor and a teacher. Clarence White's big brother has been a teacher, mentor, and good friend to some of the best performers in the business. He helped a twelve year old Marty Stuart get a job with Lester Flatt. He sat and picked for hours with a teenage David Grier. And after spending nearly fifty years in the music business, he is still exploring, learning, and teaching.

The Early Years

The first instrument Roland White learned how to play was the guitar. His father, a fiddle player, knew some basic chords and runs on the guitar and liked to sing old time country songs like "Red River Valley." Roland picked up what his father showed him on guitar and learned how to accompany his father on a few fiddle tunes and accompanied his and his sister's singing. He had yet to be exposed to bluegrass music, so his only examples came from his father, his uncles, and the occasional performer he would see on television such as Ray Price and Jim Reeves. Roland said, "My only exposure to guitar players were those who would play to back up their singing."

Later, Roland tried to learn how to play the fiddle but became frustrated because his father's full size fiddle and bow where too big for him to manage. His father brought home a "tater bug" mandolin and showed Roland that the notes were the same as a fiddle, but it was played with a pick. Roland found the mandolin easier to manage and began his mandolin playing career. However, he never gave up the guitar.

When Roland was sixteen his family moved from Maine to Southern California, where he first learned about bluegrass music. The first song he heard was Monroe's band playing "Pike County Breakdown." The bug bit him and he "wanted to hear more of this music." He would occasionally hear bluegrass on the radio, began buying bluegrass records, and encouraging his siblings to play bluegrass instruments. The White's had brought a guitar, mandolin, and a fiddle, with them from Maine. After hearing bluegrass, Roland got a job at Lockheed so that he could afford to buy a bass and a banjo. From a very young age Roland knew he wanted to play music and be in a band but he says, "Before we heard bluegrass, we had no direction. Bluegrass music gave us a direction."

Roland began buying as many as six new bluegrass records a week from a mail order house and the Whites tried to learn several new songs a week. They would listen carefully to all of the parts, Roland would type up the lyrics, and they would pick apart the instrumental breaks. This practice spilled over into their days as the Country Boys and the Kentucky Colonels. They spent a couple of hours each evening learning songs, sometimes learning one new song every night. They learned songs from Monroe, Flatt and Scruggs, The Osborne Brothers, Jim and Jesse, The Stanley Brothers, and Reno and Smiley—any bluegrass band that had a record out.

When asked about his guitar influences during these formative years, Roland said that he would try to work out anything that sounded interesting. He liked working out passing runs on the guitar and points to Edd Mayfield's G-run on "I Saw The Light," Mac Wiseman's use of runs, Jimmy Martin's guitar work, Lester Flatt's G-run, and Red Smiley's D-run as being among his favorites to listen to and play. Although he rarely played the guitar on stage during those years, he said he liked sitting around the house and playing the guitar. He added that Clarence liked to play the mandolin at home and he would back up Clarence's mandolin playing on guitar. As far as lead guitar playing goes, Roland said that Don Reno was influencial and he and Clarence both learned Don Reno's break on "Country Boy Rock and Roll" when that came out and he said "Earl Scruggs' 'Jimmy Brown

the Newsboy' was truly amazing. That and 'Wildwood Flower' were the first two songs we featured Clarence on."

Working with Monroe

Not long after the Whites moved to California, Roland's father took them to see a Bill Monroe show. By the second time the Whites went to see Monroe, about a year later, they had gained some notarity in the local area playing in talent contests and radio programs and so during Monroe's show he called for "one of the White boys to come up and do a song with him." Roland said, "Clarence wouldn't go up, so I went up on stage. Jack Cook handed me his guitar and I sang 'Sitting Alone in the Moonlight' with Monroe and backed him up on 'Soldier's Joy.'" The next time Monroe came to town the same thing happened and Roland got to play a few songs more songs on stage with the Father of Bluegrass.

In 1966 Monroe came to California to do a show in Santa Barbara and he did not have a guitar player with him. He called Roland and asked if Roland would like to fill in on guitar. Roland played one show with Monroe and said that although he knew all of the songs and had been playing them for years, he had a really hard time playing with Monroe's band. Initially he felt that he had had such a hard time because, although he knew the songs, he was not really a guitar player and hadn't practiced them as such. He later told Clarence about the experience and Clarence said, "That is a hard gig. It would have been hard for me too. It would have been hard for anybody." Roland explains that he now realizes that the difficult part about it was that every band is different and has a different feel. For a new musician to step in fresh with a group that has been playing together for years is always going to be difficult.

In 1967 Monroe's guitar player, Doug Green, left the band to go back to college. Roland's friend Lamar Grier was playing banjo with Monroe at the time and told Roland about the opening. Roland approached Monroe about the job and said, "You know where I am at on the guitar. I'd like to try the job so I can learn more." Monroe told him, "I want a man who will learn my music, not a hotshot guitar player. A hotshot is going to play it his way. I want a man who will play my music. As long as a man keeps trying, he has the job."

When Roland began playing with Monroe full time, he encountered the same problem he experienced during the show in California. He finally went to Monroe and said, "I'm having a hard time staying with you. I have all of your records with Edd Mayfield, Lester Flatt, Jimmy Martin—who should I listen to?" Monroe's reply was, "Don't listen to those boys, they never did what I wanted. You just listen to me. Listen to me sing and listen to my mandolin." Roland says that what Monroe was after in a guitar player was someone who could "follow his music and put the runs in the right place."

Whenever the band would rehearse back stage at the Opry, Monroe's comments to Roland would always have to do with the placement of the runs. He would say, "That run is not in the right place," or "You are doing too much there." If Roland did something right, Monroe would say, "That is good there." So through trial and error, Roland worked hard on improving his guitar playing in the context of Bill Monroe's band, but he says that in the nearly two years he played with Monroe he never felt he got it exactly right. It wasn't until later, when he worked with, observed, and talked with Lester Flatt that he "partly" figured out what it was that Monroe wanted.

Learning from Lester

Late in 1968, Roland saw Lester back stage at the Opry, told him that he was going to give Monroe notice the first of the year and asked Flatt about a mandolin job. Flatt and Scruggs were still together, however, they did not have a mandolin player in the band at that time. Flatt told Roland, "Keep this under your hat, but soon after the first of the year there will be a lot of changes. We might could use a mandolin player." Monroe talked Roland into doing one last tour in Europe with the band in January of 1969 and Roland agreed. When they got back from the tour, Roland called his wife from the airport. His wife told him that Flatt had called while he was away and wanted him to come play mandolin with his band. Roland said, "With Flatt and Scruggs?" His wife said, "Haven't you heard? They broke up." Roland said, "I dropped the phone. I couldn't believe it."

Roland and Vic Jordan both left Monroe and joined Lester's band. The band was exactly the same as the Foggy Mountain Boys band with Roland coming in on mandolin and Vic Jordan taking the banjo spot. Roland said that both he and Vic experienced some difficulty fitting into the band. He said, "These guys had been playing together for years and years. Their timing was so perfect. We were just not in the groove." Roland went to Flatt and explained his problem. Flatt told him, "It takes about a year for a new man to fit into a band that has been together as long as we have." Roland says, "I have found that to be true."

Working with Flatt, Roland said one of the most important things he learned was where to put the back-beat on the mandolin. He says that during his years with the Kentucky Colonels he does not feel like he had a strong steady back-beat. Flatt taught him how to do that. Additionally, he said that watching Flatt's guitar work, he was able to figure out where to put in a guitar run and where the run was supposed to begin and end. He said, "Watching Flatt, I was finally able to figure out what Bill Monroe had meant by 'putting the run in the right place.'"

Country Gazette

When Roland left Flatt in order to rejoin Clarence and Eric in the New Kentucky Colonels, he said that he hadn't seen a lot of Clarence during the years that he was with Monroe and Flatt and Clarence was doing studio work and playing with the Byrds. The reunion gave the brothers a chance to talk and catch up on things. One of the things that they talked a lot about was music. Clarence's guitar playing had definitely changed and matured over the years and although the experience playing electric guitar had something to do with that, Roland says that Clarence would listen to every instrument for ideas and inspiration. He listened to horns, he listened to Josh Graves, Don Reno, Earl Scruggs, Doc Watson, Django Reinhardt, fiddle players, etc. If he heard something on a horn that gave him an idea, he would work with it. Roland recommends that players "Get information from various sources, process it, and then make it work for you." He continues, "Listen to what Monroe, Flatt, Scruggs, and Chubby Wise did together. Listen to the Stanleys. Listen to Reno and Smiley. It is all bluegrass, but it is different. There is a different texture to each band's music. Listening to any good music will open your mind."

Roland's next guitar job was with the Country Gazette. To prepare for that job, he brought out the tapes he had of

his Clarance and listened to him to get ideas. The unique aspect of this band (Alan Munde-banjo, Byron Berline-fiddle, Roger Bush-bass, Roland White-guitar) was that there was no mandolin player. Roland says, "Without the mandolin, there was no back-beat except for Roger's occasional bass slap. I had to do more of a back beat with the guitar, but I tried not to make it to obtrusive. I put in a good back-beat with a little shuffle."

Roland says that his guitar and mandolin playing has been different with every band he has played in and it is still different today. He says that he still sits down and thinks about it and is always experimenting. He says, "When you think you know it all—think again."

Rhythm Guitar Philosophy

While Roland is primarily known as a mandolin player, his knowledge of the guitar's role in bluegrass music is extensive. It is something he has studied and worked hard at over the years. My conversation with Roland about rhythm guitar provided me with great insights—things I had never been aware of or thought about as carefully as he has. My ideas about what the player should learn didn't change so much, but his suggestions about how they should be learned, practiced, and executed really opened my eyes.

Roland's general philosophy about playing rhythm guitar is to keep it straight and simple and not to get in anybody else's way. He says that when you play the "boom" and the "chick" in the "boom-chick" rhythm, you should not focus on, or over-emphasize, the "boom" or the "chick." The bass has the down-beat "boom" covered and the mandolin is executing the back-beat "chick." The key is to be right there on both the "boom" and the "chick," but not be in the way of the bass or mandolin, and then also be able to fill-in between the "boom" and the "chick." He says, "The guitar has a role at both ends and in the middle."

Concerning bass runs and passages, Roland says that the most important things to learn are when, and when not, to execute them and when they should begin and end. He says that placement and duration are the key aspects of bass runs. He feels that most intermediate level players use too many runs. The basic guideline is to never cover up a vocal line and don't take away from the soloist. Roland says, "You do not want to disturb anything."

Roland's wife, Diane, summarized Roland's rhythm playing as follows: "Roland's guitar playing is organic. It's hard to dissect into mechanical components because it is flowing and changing. Roland's playing has dynamics that move with the song and support it. He understands that the emphasis can change throughout a song. There are times to emphasize the downbeat and times to emphasize the upbeat. He knows that there is a role for the guitar in creating a rhythmic and harmonic texture in a song that is separate from the parts played by the bass and mandolin. He listens for the weight of the various instruments in a band and knows how to help distribute the weight so that the feel is right. He understands that to consistenly whack the guitar hard on the backbeat, imitating a mandolin chop, can unbalance the weight of the band and make it unwieldy. He understands that if you play too many bass notes or runs in the same places in each measure the tune becomes rigidly bound and can't flow. He is automatically assessing the weight of the musical 'body' the band is creating and able to do what it takes to make the 'body'move gracefully. His main attention, playing any instrument, is to the whole weight, sound, texture of the 'body' of the music, and he can make it dance."

Teaching Students

Roland said that when he teaches a beginning student how to play rhythm guitar, he shows them basic chords, strums, the boom-chick rhythm, and simple bass runs, as part of the curriculum, but what he mostly focuses on is technique. He teaches them how to cleanly chord the guitar with the left hand and emphasizes right hand technique. He says a common problem with beginners, and even some intermediate players, is that the right hand swing is too wide. He teaches his students how to economize the right hand strum so that it becomes very efficient. He also teaches his students how to loosen up and relax the right hand and use wrist motion in the execution of light and slow strums. Roland breaks the beginning student in on a simple song and moves through it "one step at a time." He says, "I pick a song as familiar as 'Will The Circle Be Unbroken' that has a simple melody."

When he begins teaching runs, he teaches simple runs—one run at a time—and encourages the student to lean into the high E string with the pinky and ring fingers so that they have a good point of reference and can get some bite into the downstroke. He also teaches that almost every note of a run should be executed with a downstroke of the pick—even if the run includes eighth notes. Roland says, "Down-up picking is good for lead playing, but when you are playing rhythm runs, the majority of them need to be downstrokes. Clarence played some up-strokes on runs, but the upstrokes were almost implied. He rolled off of them lightly. That is one of the secrets of his rhythm playing. There were upstrokes, but the downstrokes were what was emphasized."

When intermediate or advanced players come to Roland for a lesson, he will first have them play through a few songs accompanying Roland's mandolin. He listens to what they are doing and makes suggestions for improvement. He says typically when the intermediate students is asked to demonstrate runs, they will play too much and will use too many down-ups instead of a majority of downstrokes.

When asked what final advice he could give to players intent on improving their rhythm guitar playing, Roland said, "Stay away from big jam sessions. You don't learn anything in a big jam session. When a jam gets too large and you can't hear people play, you lose control. People tend to play to loud and too fast in a big jam." Roland encourages playing with others, but to always keep it in a band context. If you are going to have a jam, it is best to only invite one fiddler, one banjo player, etc. That way it is manageable and you can learn something instead of playing too fast, too hard, and too loud. You want to learn how to compliment the band. You can't do that if there are too many players.

Another point Roland made was that he feels it is helpful to watch other players play. He points out that some of the rhythm guitar pioneers, such as Doc Watson, Mac Wiseman, Charlie Waller, Jimmy Martin, and Jim McReynolds, are still out there playing today. He encourages players to get out and watch some of these early pioneers who have had a influence on all of today's great players.

Roland White can be contacted through his website: www.rolandwhite.com. He teaches lessons at his home in Nashville and also teaches when he is on the road with the Nashville Bluegrass Band. If you are ever in Nashville, or if the Nashville Bluegrass Band is coming to your town, send Roland an email and set up a lesson. You won't regret it.

Gospel Guitar

with Harold Streeter

Blessed Assurance

Among the abundance of gospel songs we've all grown to love, many of our favorites are waltzes - well, let's just say, songs in 3/4 time, because one may not always wish to dance to gospel numbers. While this column won't always focus on 3/4 time gospel tunes, the first column most assuredly did with "Amazing Grace," and this one does as well with a wonderful gospel piece that dates back to around the turn of the century called "Blessed Assurance." It's a tune that continues to make the rounds wherever gospel music is sung and played, particularly if the singing and playing is in bluegrass and country music settings.

"Blessed Assurance" is arranged here predominantly in Carter style, with a little crosspicking thrown in to help keep it interesting, plus a few chord/melody phrases for those instances involving melody on the high strings. Originally a five chord piece (in this key: C, F, D7, G7, and Dm), a few liberties have been taken here and there with the chord progression - influences from a great piano rendition I heard some years ago by someone whose name, due to early senility, escapes me. Added are not only occasional Am and Em chords, but a rather strange looking one in the substitute measures called G7b9/G#. We'll get to the funny chord and to the substitute measures after discussing a few other things worthy of mention.

First, because of the many crosspicking phrases scattered throughout, it's best to adhere to the usual or "normal" approach of playing notes occurring on down beats with down strokes and notes on up beats with up strokes.

Next are two examples of "contrary motion" to call your attention to—the term for a line (in this case, the melody) which ascends while another line (in this case, the bass) descends simultaneously. Contrary motion is a great way to add interest to measures in need of it, and the examples occupy the 1st and 13th measures of the second verse (measures 25 and 37).

Lastly, the two measures at the end. What we have here, for lack of a better term, is a "delayed hammer" from second string open to first fret to provide a little steel guitar effect. To execute it, first play the second string open and then the note on the first string 3rd fret. After you've played the first string, then complete your hammer to the first fret, which should coincide with the first beat of the very last measure. If that sounds like double-speak, the CD for this issue should clear up any shortcomings in the language department.

Now for the substitute measures. There's twelve in all and they're included to lend more variety to the piece just in case you'd like to play through it twice. In terms of chord progression, notice that substitute measures 36 through 40 provide more of a departure from the melody and original progression than do the others.

Next, let's deal with the funny chord your accompanist is supposed to play, written above substitute measure 37: G7b9/G#. The first part of its name, G7b9, is a jazz sentiment. In terms of sound, particularly for guitarists, 7b9 chords are synonymous with diminished 7th chords, and just like diminished 7th chords, they reappear every three frets, up or down. As to the second part, the "Slash-G#" doesn't mean you are somehow magically supposed to play two chords simultaneously. Because G# (or Ab if you prefer) is the flatted 9th of the G scale, it just means in this case to place the flatted 9th in the bass. Incidentally, in this context, because the chord resolves to Am7 in sub-measure 38, it could just as easily be thought of as E7b9—three frets down from G7b9, because that's what E7, and by extension, E7b9 chords do; they resolve to A chords, major or minor.

Finally, just to end with a commercial, if you'd like a free catalog of flatpicking and fingerstyle tabs, just write to me at 4950 East 20th Ave, Post Falls, ID 83854.

Flatpicking '99
Hear What You Have Been Reading
20 Tunes by 20 of your favorite artists

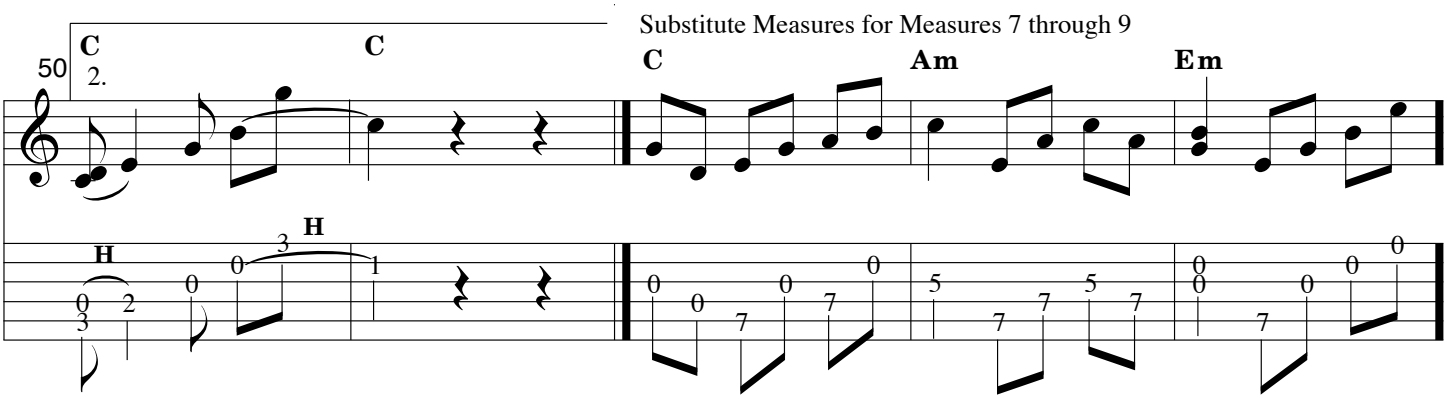
• Gary Brewer • Doug Rorrer • John Lowell •
• Wyatt Rice • Peter McLaughlin • Rob Pearcy • •
Brad Davis • Dix Bruce • Travis Alltop •
• Roy Curry • John Moore • Robin Kessinger •
• Ray Craft • Jim Hurst • John Chapman •
• Tim May • James Alan Shelton • Cody Kilby •
• David Grier • Tony Rice & John Carlini •

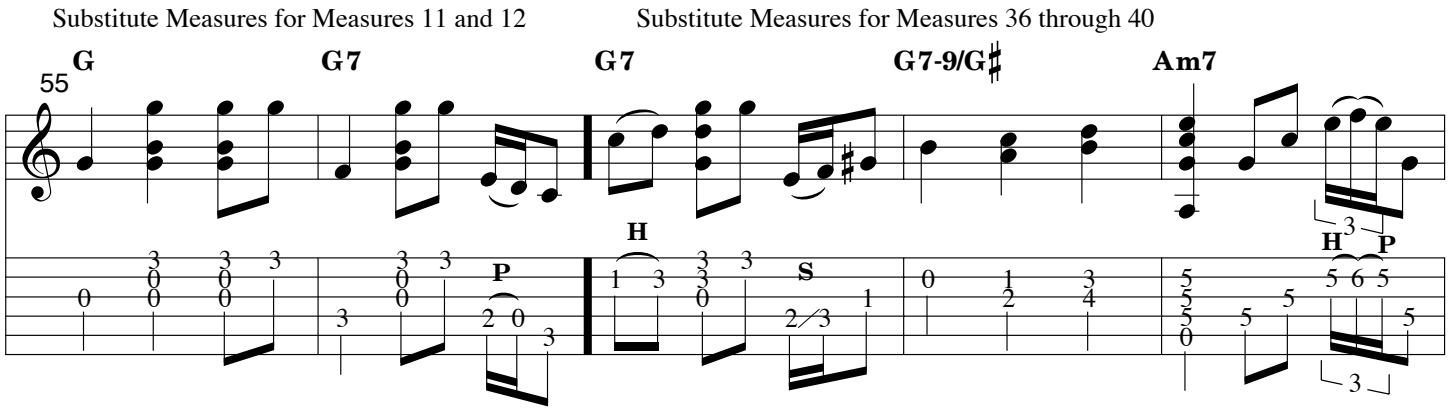
Blessed Assurance

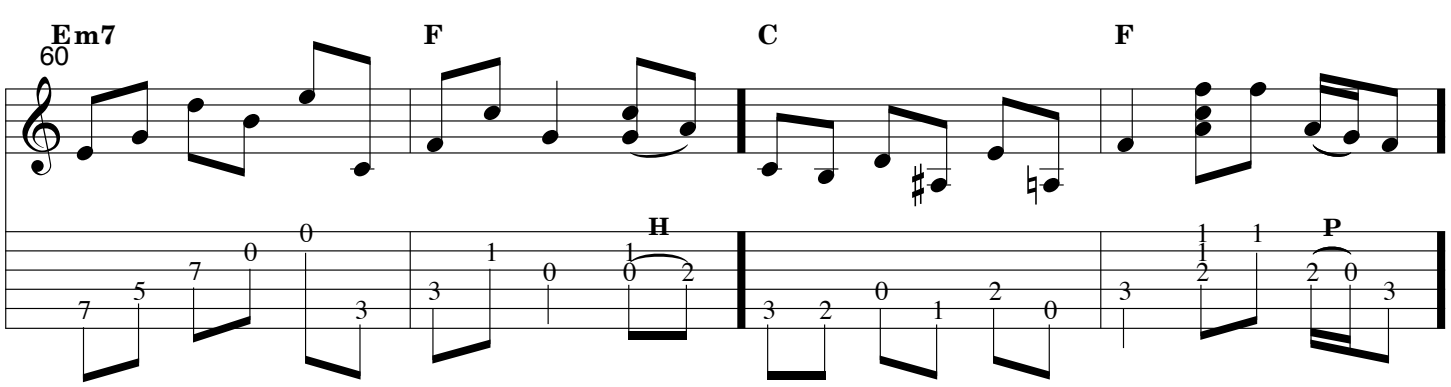
Arranged by Harold Streeter

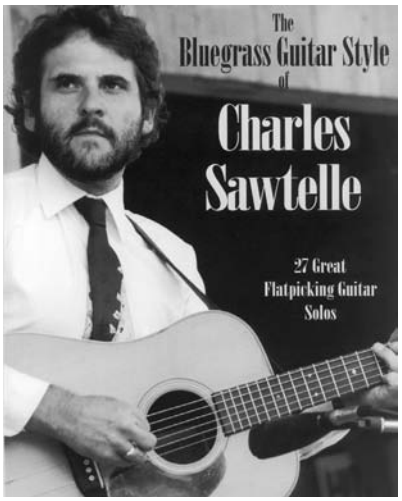
Blessed Assurance (con't)

Blessed Assurance (con't)









The Bluegrass Guitar Style of Charles Sawtelle

CALL

1 (800) 413-8296

to order with Mastercard or Visa

In addition to the tablature and standard notation of 27 Sawtelle solos, this book also includes:

Detailed Sawtelle biography, An in-depth interview with Charles, Section on Charles' rhythm style, Charles Sawtelle Discography, The first ever Slade biography, Notes on each solo transcription, Dozens of photographs

FLATPICK INSPIRATION

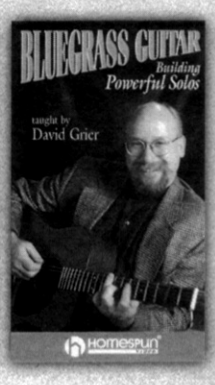
FROM HOMESPUN VIDEO

CD INSTRUCTION

EXPLORING THE FINGERBOARD
taught by Russ Barenberg
6 CDS + BOOK $59.95

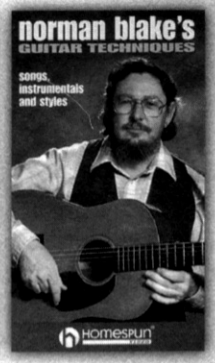
A road map for fully understanding the entire guitar fingerboard. Find and play any note in any position on the neck, build chords and improvise melodies.

AN INTIMATE LESSON WITH TONY RICE
taught by Tony Rice
60-MINUTE VIDEO $39.95



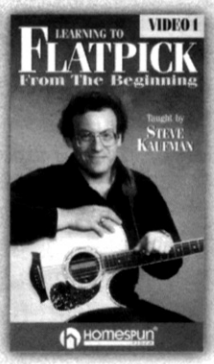
BLUEGRASS GUITAR
Building Powerful Solos
taught by David Grier
75-MINUTE VIDEO $39.95

EASY BLUEGRASS AND COUNTRY GUITAR
taught by Happy Traum
60-MINUTE VIDEO $19.95

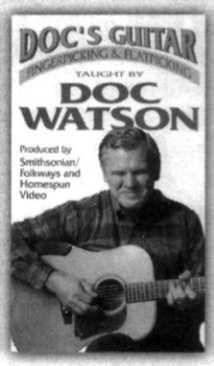


NORMAN BLAKE'S GUITAR TECHNIQUES
Songs, Instrumentals & Styles
taught by Norman Blake
90-MINUTE VIDEO $39.95

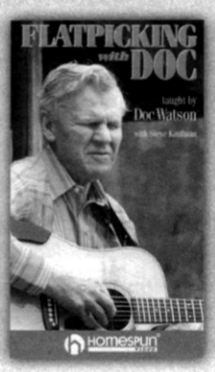
BASIC BLUEGRASS RHYTHM GUITAR
taught by Steve Kaufman
70-MINUTE VIDEO $39.95



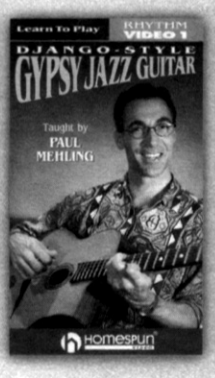
LEARNING TO FLATPICK
taught by Steve Kaufman
A three-video series $99.95
Video 1: $29.95; Video 2: $39.95;
Video 3: $39.95



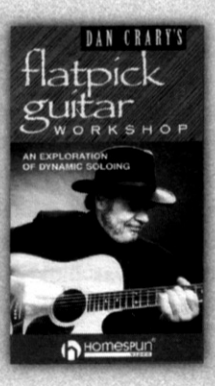
DOC'S GUITAR
Fingerpicking and Flatpicking
taught by Doc Watson
90-MINUTE VIDEO $39.95



FLATPICKING WITH DOC
taught by Doc Watson
80-MINUTE VIDEO $39.95



LEARN TO PLAY DJANGO-STYLE GYPSY JAZZ GUITAR
taught by Paul Mehling
A two-video series $49.95
$29.95 each video



FLATPICK GUITAR WORKSHOP
An Exploration of Dynamic Soloing
taught by Dan Crary
85-MINUTE VIDEO $39.95

Homespun® video

To Order Call 1-800-33-TAPES
(914) 246-2550 Fax (914) 246-5282
FREE CATALOG

www.homespuntapes.com
FOR DEALER INQUIRIES IN US & CANADA CALL:
HAL•LEONARD 1-800-554-0626

On The Web

David Dugas

Welcome to "On the Web." I'm going to cover several different sites in this column, which include guitar tools, places to buy Irish and Scottish music as well as one guitar builder using unusual material in his instruments. I've always had a keen interest in music from the British Isles as well as French-Canadian music and I found a couple of interesting sites that I'd like to share with you.

I really enjoy music from Ireland and Scotland and was very pleased when one of my fellow flat-pickles mentioned *Portland America*. Even though there is very little flatpicking specific material on this site, it's a great site with lots of interesting Scottish music. **http://www.portlandamerica.com/**

Thirty Below is dedicated to French Canadian fiddling in Quebec. Not only does the site have links to important local events, but also contains a diverse variety of music. Very cool. **http://www.qbc.clic.net/~thirtybe/**

Mark Klan has put together a very useful site with several very cool web based guitar tools: *CapoCalc*, *ChordMatch* and *Chord Spell*. *CapoCalc* determines where to set a capo to match another person, while playing in a different key. *ChordMatch* finds chords that contain a given melody note (useful for "figuring out" chords to songs). *ChordSpell* names the chord formed by the notes you select, with optional guitar fretboard entry and recently added rootless chords. Very cool stuff. **http://www.planetc.com/users/msk/**

Here's a very useful site with a listing of various guitar builders and repair folks. The site isn't dedicated to acoustic instruments, but it does contain a lot of links to folks building acoustic instruments. Very useful. **http://home.rochester.rr.com/ronelong/makers.htm**

Ever wonder what you should do with your used strings? Well, Daryl Purpose started the *Second Strings Project* in order to distribute used guitar strings to needy folks in other countries. What a great idea. **http://www.darrylpurpose.com/news/index.htm**

Pawless Guitars in Lewisville, TX has a very modest site with pictures laying out his building process. I like his choice of woods—Mesquite, Texas Rosewood and Cocobolo. Interesting stuff. **http://home1.gte.net/pawless/index.htm**

That's it for this edition of "On the Web!" Next issue we'll cover another guitar builder using unusual material in their instruments as well as other fun places "On the Web!"

Learn the tunes and solos of your choice, in any format.

The Original Custom Transcription Service

All styles and instruments: flat-picking, fingerstyle, chord solos, melody, improvisation; other instruments (horns, woodwinds, piano, etc.) transcribed for guitar, mandolin, etc. I can also create custom arrangements.
Private lessons via U.S. mail.
Berklee graduate, professional recording and performing artist.
Tab and/or standard notation.
Details and tips on the Web:
http://world.std.com/~jmcgann

John McGann
P.O. Box 688-FM
Jamaica Plain, Ma. 02130-0006
(617) 325-6853

PICKIN' FIDDLE TUNES

by Adam Granger

MADAME BONAPARTE

Greetings, pickers everywhere! This time, we're drawing from the prolific and rich Irish catalog for a fine hornpipe, *Madame Bonaparte*.

If you have been putting off purchasing the companion CDs that editor Dan Miller and columnist Brad Davis offer for each issue of *Flatpicking Guitar Magazine*, wait no longer. You'll want an audio reference on this one in order to hear the stylistic treatment appropriate to traditional hornpipes (For more on this, see the informative and entertaining box below).

This tune can be found in the "Set Dance" section of the wonderful book *O'Neill's Music of Ireland*. A set dance is a dance designed to go with a specific tune; large numbers of them can be found in both the *O'Neill's* and the *Cole's* collections (for more information on *Cole's*, see "About *Cole's*" in my column of Volume 3, Number 2).

When (not if) you get the CD, note not only the essential hornpipe cadence, but also the interplay of clipped and sustained notes. Very hornpipy (Hornpipish? Hornpipoid?) The tempo as played on the CD is a good hornpipe dance tempo.

This version is transcribed from a 1987 live recording of The Eclectic Brothers, and is an Adam solo. Check out the great backup: bassist Gordy Abel's root-fives and Dick Nunneley's fine spare chording create rhythm to die for. Only perfect. . .

One quick note about the form of this tune: It ain't "square"; it's crooked, and in a very unusual way: The first part is standard eight-bar-repeated, but the second is twelve-bar-repeated, for a total of 40 bars. (For a scintillating explication of this topic, see "Fiddle Tune Forms," my *FGM* column for Volume 1, Number 5.)

READING *EASY-TAB*

Easytab is like conventional tablature, except that timing notation has been streamlined and simplified. Since fiddle tunes are comprised mainly of eighth notes, *Easytab* uses the eighth note as its basic unit. An eighth rest is indicated by a dot. Therefore, a note with a dot after it is a quarter note, and a note with three dots after it is a half note. There are a total of eight notes and rests

FOR BEGINNERS

Pick with an alternating style: down-up-down-up-down-up etc. The first note of each measure should be a downstroke, the last an upstroke. **Include rests** in this alternating pattern. This keeps you "in synch", playing downstrokes on the beats, so that, no matter what the configuration of notes and rests in an eight-unit measure, the right hand plays them down-up-down-up-down-up-

WHEN IS A HORNPIPE NOT A HORNPIPE. . .

One of the questions most commonly asked of me, and a frequent topic of conversation on the Flatpick list (What? You don't know about FLATPICK-L@LISTSERV.NODAK.EDU?) is about the distinction among reels, single jigs, double jigs, slip-jigs, hornpipes and breakdowns. The jigs are all based on 6/8 or–in the case of slip-jigs–9/8 time, so they're fairly easy to differentiate (for more on jigs, see my column in Volume 1, Number 2). The relationship among the others is, however, a muddied one, indeed.

Reels and breakdowns are safely considered synonymous: both are pretty much played in a straight eight-to-the-bar style as fast as we poor flatpickers can make our little fingers go (and often faster).

Hornpipes are a different matter. Until bluegrassers got hold of some of the Irish chestnuts–*Sailor's* and *Fisher's*, most notably–hornpipes occupied a rhythmic niche all their own. While bluegrassers have smoothed out and sped up hornpipes, effectively making them indistinguishable from reels and breakdowns, hornpipes traditionally are dance tunes, played at a slower tempo and with a pronounced pause after every second note. (This could be shown in music notation as every other note being dotted, but Irish collections generally dispense with this on the assumption that folks know how to play hornpipes.)

This is a purely musical issue, and, as such, doesn't keep a maverick like me awake at nights. Do know, however, that if you run across Irish dancers who want you to play a hornpipe so they can dance to it, they'll expect–and require!–the traditional hornpipe treatment. (Quite apart from the pure social and musical incorrectness of not accomodating them in such a situation, terrible accidents can occur from people's attempts to dance hornpipes at bluegrass tempos. I remember one night in Chicago when a banjo player played *Sailor's Hornpipe* at 144 bpm and one dancer's feet flew off her legs and across the room, severely damaging a valuable wall hanging. It was thanks only to the finest terpsichorean surgeon in America and a talented Fine Art Restoration Expert that no permanent damage was done, but that dancer now refuses, understandably, to be in the same room with a banjo).

While *Sailor's Hornpipe* and *Fisher's Hornpipe* lend themselves nicely to "straightening out" and speeding up, many hornpipes don't. This is one of them. When this tune is bluegrassized (if that ain't a word, it oughtta be) it comes out sounding really goofy. Thus, *Madame Bonaparte* affords us all the opportunity to buckle down and learn the traditional hornpipe style. Ain't life grand?

The first pass through Madame Bonaparte is pretty straightforward and very close to the version in O'Neill's. The variation is something else again, being comprised almost exclusively of triplets. Ex-Powdermilk Biscuit Bandmate Bob Douglas and I copped this variation from English piper and concertina player Alistair Anderson when he was a guest on A Prairie Home Companion twenty-three years ago. We sat backstage covered in dry sponges and soaked it up.

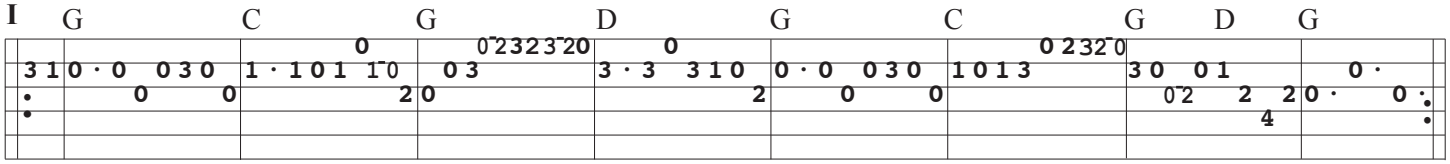
It's a wonderful thing, this version, and if you want a real thrill, you ought to hear it played on a concertina!

Okay, enough shilly-shallying. Order that CD, if you haven't already, and let's get to work!

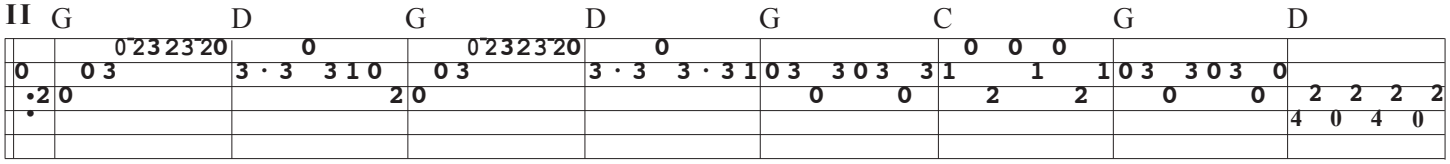
MADAME BONAPARTE

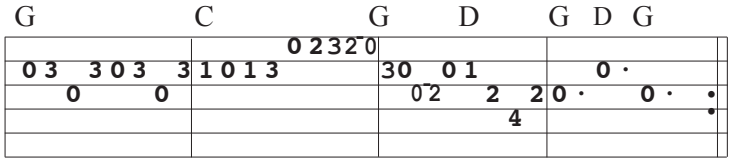
KEY: A (CAPO 2)

I



II





There now. That wasn't so bad, was it? Let's move on: As mentioned, the variation below is virtually all triplets. I indicated the first ten with ties, then put "etc" to reduce clutter. If you're a tie freak, feel free to add the rest of them.

IRISH MUSIC 101: ABOUT *O'NEILL'S*

Francis O'Neill was an Irish-born American who collected, with the assistance of transcriber James O'Neill (no relation), a wealth of Irish dance music (reels, hornpipes and jigs, as opposed to airs and songs) around the turn of the century.

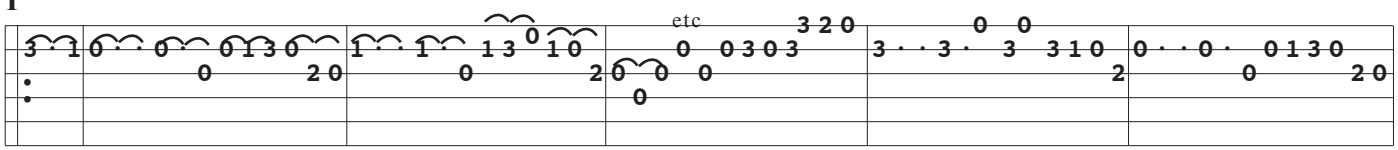
O'Neill's bailiwick was Chicago, where he was, among other things, a Superintendant of Police. Then as now, there was a wealth of Irish musicians in the Chicago area.

The influence of *O'Neill's* on the propagation and semi-standardization of Irish dance music–both stateside and in Ireland–cannot be overestimated.

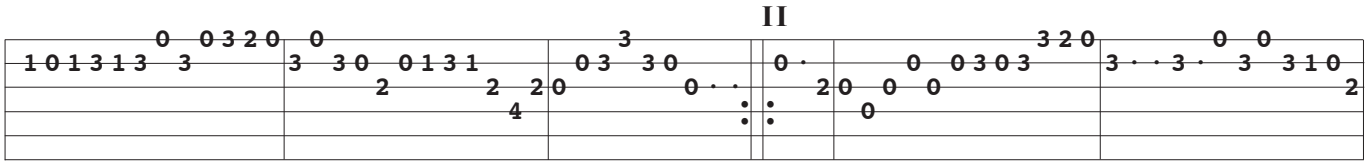
This is either good or bad, depending upon to whom one speaks. Not in question is that *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* is an outstanding collection.

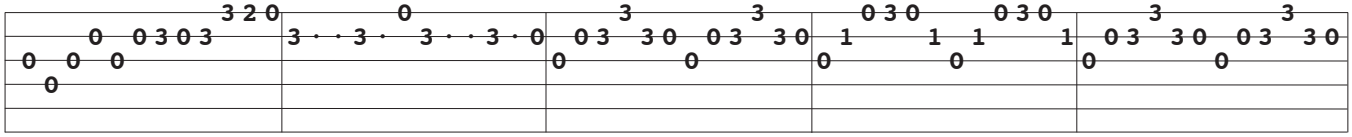
VARIATION

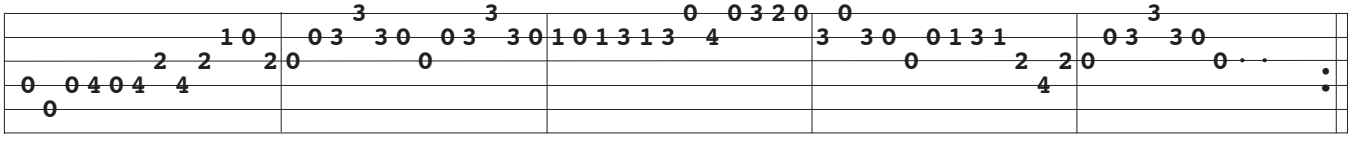
I



II







"But wait! How should I pick this?" I hear you ask. The short answer is either with straight alternation or jig-style: down-up-down down-up-down. The latter is more "authentic", but I alternate it because that's how I learned a quarter-century ago when I didn't know any better. Old dog, old tricks.

Okay, that should keep you all off the streets and out of trouble for a while. I don't want any bad reports on any of you coming across my desk for the next two months!

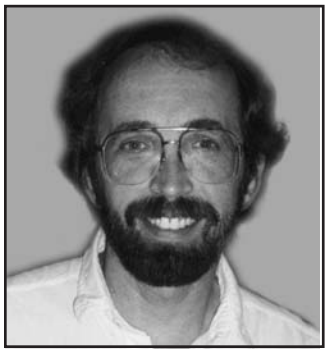
Adam Granger is an old hippie who thinks people should be allowed to do what they want as long as they don't hurt anyone else. He makes a third of his living teaching, a third performing, and a third from his publishing company. If he weren't married to an attorney, he'd be living like a student. A poor student. He loves fatty foods and scotch, but is trying to get over it.

Adam's father was an English professor, his mother a Christmas card artist. His late brother was a writer. His maternal grandmother and grandfather were a painter and an architect, respectively; his paternal grandmother and grandfather were a painter and an attorney, respectively. Adam's 22-year-old son is a hip-hop musician.

Exploring Bluegrass Guitar

"Yellow Rose of Texas"

by Steve Pottier



Readers of this column know I'm a huge fan of Clarence White's guitar playing, most of which has never made it to commercial recording. In this day and age of "faster, faster, more notes" I'm still thrilled when I hear him play a simple melody with ingenious turns and his masterful feel for timing. "Yellow Rose of Texas" is just such a melody, one that I've heard since I was a kid. I've only heard Clarence play it once on a practice tape, and it truly is a jewel.

The first break is a pretty straightforward statement of the melody and not too much syncopation. Measure 4 has a very typical Clarence lick: slide, jump to a high note in the chord and let it ring while you play a lower note (often that is an octave jump). Look for that later in the second break. You'll also find lots of double stops, and forward and backward slides. The last measure is interesting in that you would expect the first note to be an open G note (the melody), but it is temporarily suspended as he sets up for the next break.

The second break starts off very simply, with lots of space (like the first break). The third measure shows a syncopated melody, jumping the beat to put the melody on the off beat (the 2nd note). Measure 4 has another slide/jump combination. Measures 5 and 6 have double stops and a hammer instead of a slide. Measure 7 uses a lot of syncopation, putting the melody on the offbeat (upstroke). Measures 9 and 10 relax a bit with a simpler line and more space. I personally like that as a listener; it gives my ear a chance to regroup. More notes there would not have been nearly as effective. Measure 11 shows some of the same syncopation as measure 7. Measure 12 has a straight forward and backward slide. Measures 13-16 have one of the coolest passages I've ever heard. The left hand is actually very simple through this, with the right hand jumping strings all over the place. Look for the slide/jumps, and the anticipated syncopation at the end of 14, where you expect the open D note to be in the next measure.

Have fun with this one, it's a treasure.

Steve Pottier spottier@jps.net

Yellow Rose of Texas

Arranged by Clarence White
Transcribed by Steve Pottier

Yellow Rose of Texas (con't)

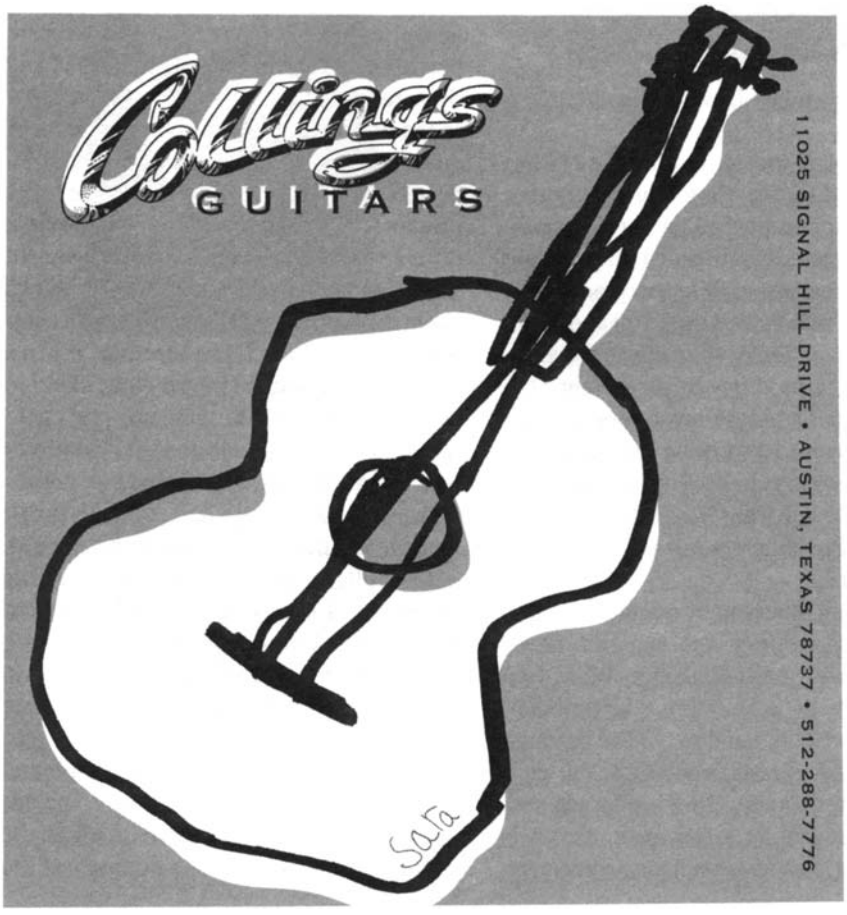
John McGann's Eclectic Acoustic

Irish Reel: Maids of Castlebar

Here's a classic Irish reel arranged for guitar. The slow version features a fairly traditional apporoach with conservative chord choices; the fast version expands the chord possibilities and throws in a few bluesy F to F# phrases, far from "the pure drop" of traditional Irish music, so we'll just call it Irish with a Yankee accent. The picked triplets can be played down/up/down or up/down/up, whatever works best for you. I like the down/up/down, followed by another downstroke to get back into the alternate down/up flow.

This is just one man's approach to the tune. To really play this style (or any) with authority, spend time listening to and enjoying the masters of this music-most of whom do not happen to be guitarists!

John McGann's latest recording projects include Rust Farm's *Snows of March* produced by Tim O'Brien, label TBA, and Matt Glaser's *Wayfaring Strangers* to be released on Rounder in late spring.



Banjo NewsLetter
THE 5-STRING BANJO MAGAZINE
BNL is the monthly Magazine dedicated to all aspects of the 5-string. Tabs tips, reviews and interviews.
Banjo PICK IT UP!
Call Now for a FREE Sample Issue
(800) 759-7425
P.O. Box 3418
Annapolis, MD 21403
e-mail: bnl@annap.infi.net
web site: www.tiac.net/users/bnl

Bowl 'Em Over!

Fender 1984-'85 Bowling Ball Strat
Free Catalog
MANDOLIN BROS. LTD
629 Forest Ave,Staten Island, NY 10310
Tel (718) 981-3226 / 981-8585
www.mandoweb.com
email: mandolin@mandoweb.com

Maids of Castlebar

Arranged by John McGann

Maids of Castlebar (con't)

Maids of Castlebar (con't)

FlatpickingMercantile.com
Acoustic Guitar Instruction, Accessories, CDs

New Release Highlight
Bull Harman: *Bull's-Eye*
Reviewed by Dan Dingeldein

Growing up in central Illinois in the seventies and eighties made it really difficult to see live bluegrass, let alone flatpickers. Fortunately for me there were three flatpickers in the area where I was raised. The one that influenced me the most, and the first flatpicker I ever saw live, was Bull Harman. *Bull's-Eye* is his first solo recording and let me say "it's a gooden'."

Bull's-Eye is a combination of original and well known songs: seven of the thirteen songs are written by Bull. (Bull's real name is David, however I would not recommend calling him that name since he'd probably not answer.) Bull has some of the best musicians in the business (both local and national) playing on this CD. Included are Alison Krauss, Rhonda Vincent, Tina and Keith Adair, Bob Black and Rob McDonnell (both formerly of Rage), Cecil Tinnon and Kevin Liley (the previously mentioned other two flatpickers from central Illinois), Kirk Brandenberger, four sisters and a cousin, and his family members (Bulls wife Tammy, his brother Mike and his wife Stacey and Bull's sister Lori Harman Cummins).

Knowing the majority of the personnel on this CD, I knew it was going to be fantastic. To call this a guitar CD would do it serious injustice. It takes you from traditional tunes like "Shenandoah Breakdown," to gypsy jazz tune like "Gypsy Dream"; from traditional gospel "Unclouded Day" to an original love song, "Am I Losing You." Bull did a terrific job on matching the songs to the vocalists and instrumentalists. He feels that there are some songs that do not sound as good when certain people sing them. They may be great singers but not all singers can sing all tunes.

Bull's family came from the Blue Ridge area of Floyd, Virginia. His paternal grandfather played frailing banjo and mandolin. In the 1920s he moved to central Illinois to look for work and that is where Bull was raised. Bull began playing guitar at the age of 10 and brother Mike showed him a few chords on an old Kalamazoo guitar. To this day you can still see remnants of Bull's childhood in

the way he will sometimes play his "G" chord. He places his thumb over the sixth string, third fret and places his first finger over the second and first stings to create a "clawhammer G chord."

After a few years Bull, his brother, and sister formed the Harman Trio. He started by playing strictly rhythm guitar and led the Trio to fame throughout the Midwest bluegrass scene. While in Knoxville, TN he picked up a flatpicking album by Royce Campbell, which really introduced him to flatpicking. From there he started listening and studying Norman Blake. Then came TONY (if you have to ask "Tony who?" go back to playing electric guitar). Tony opened up a whole new world in Bull's guitar playing. Bull's sister Lori told me a story that when Tony first came out that Bull would get up in the morning do his chores on the family farm come in eat breakfast, practice until the bus got there for school. When he got home he would do his chores, eat dinner, do homework (maybe), and practice until he went to bed. Even thought Bull admits that he can't play like Tony, he also knows that he doesn't want to play like Tony. Bull prefers to think of himself as a rhythm player first and a flatpicker second, "I love to play rhythm because you can get so many different rhythms and sounds out of a guitar." Bull has been told that he has a powerful right hand. He claims it came about because he had to be heard over his brother's banjo playing. Bull's idea on rhythm makes a lot of sense: either you have good rhythm or you don't. Good rhythm can't be taught, rhythm must be felt.

Bull has many influences that are intertwined within his guitar playing. Tony, for one, his good friend David Grier for another. The acoustic guitar playing of Nancy Wilson of the rock group Heart also influenced him. Bull says that he still gets influences from music, rock and roll to country, "anything that has acoustic guitar in it. It's not necessary that I learn anything from the music, it's just that I love the sound of it and it gives me new incentives and a direction to go. Music to me is feel, it doesn't matter what kind of music it is, as long as it speaks to me."

www.musicianexchange.com

THE auction website for great musical instruments

Designed for musicians by musicians!

We list only the good stuff and we help protect buyers and sellers from Internet fraud!

Great Instruments! Great Bargains! Give us a try!

"Hey! wanna jam?"

Pete Wernick's

Bluegrass JAM CAMP

...at MerleFest!

April 24-27, 2000

Wilkesboro, North Carolina
Monday-Thursday prior to the

a fun and friendly event for closet pickers!

ALL BLUEGRASS INSTRUMENTS WELCOME
No jamming experience necessary
You will be jamming the first morning!

What it is:
Classroom and hands-on instruction with lots of jamming, 9:30-5 daily.
You will be grouped with others according to experience.
Group and individual pointers on instrumental technique, harmony singing, and the how-to's of a variety of jam situations.

Open to:
All bluegrass instruments: guitar, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, bass, resonator guitar, even harmonica, autoharp or dulcimer, Non-picking singers welcome!

Basic requirement: You must be able to tune your instrument (electronic tuning devices welcome) and change smoothly between simple chords. You don't need to be able to solo, but it helps. Singing is not required but is a big plus.

How to sign up:
Fill out the form below and send $80 deposit ($170 due on arrival.)

Attendance is limited. Available space will be given to underrepresented instruments (usually bass and fiddle) and to those able to sing verses of a variety of bluegrass songs.

Sign me up for Bluegrass Jam Camp!
Please send confirmation of registration along with information on the Merle Watson Festival and available accomodations.

[ ] $80 deposit enclosed, $170 due on arrival

Name:_____

Address:_____

City, State, Zip:_____

Home telephone:_____

Check which instruments you play, and circle the main one:
[ ] guitar [ ] banjo [ ] mandolin
[ ] fiddle [ ] bass
[ ] resonator guitar (dobro)
[ ] other:_____ [ ] none
Do you sing? [ ] yes, know many songs

DR. BANJO 7930-G Oxford Road Niwot, CO 80503

Bull has played with some of the best musicians in the business. Bull met Alison when she was just 11 years old and she asked him to back her up at a fiddle contest in Illinois. In the mid-eighties, Bull took some time off from playing to spend more time with his family. During that time he began to hone his music and lyric writing skills. In 1996 he got a phone call from long time friend Rhonda Vincent who was in search of a guitar player. During his three-year stint with Rhonda he had the privilege to play on the Grand Ole Opry and Ernest Tubb's Midnight Jamboree. Now on occasion he plays with the Adairs.

Bull's main stage ax is a 1983 HD-28 Martin. His favorite is his 1976 D-35 Martin. Bull says that the D-35 responds better with his style of playing but has problems with the neck pulling up since it does not have an adjustable truss rod. He uses the 88mm green Tortex picks with the pointed corner. He tried using tortoise shell picks but had a problem with them breaking or having to shape them too often so he switched to the tortex. Having used them throughout his career, Bull just recently got an endorsement with GHS strings. Bull primarily uses medium string but switches out the low E for a 54mm or 52mm. He says that for him the lighter gauge is easier to bend, and lasts longer for use with drop-D tuning.

To get in touch with Bull you can contact him at his website: www.angelfire.com/biz3/BullHarman (Note: this site is case sensitive.) *Bull's-Eye* is a must have for any music lover's collection. Expect great things to come out of this guy over the next several years. If you don't have *Bull's-Eye* GET IT! If you do have it SPREAD THE WORD!

Song List: Fighting Irishman, Unclouded Day, Nashville Skyline Rag, Bull's-Eye, Tennessee Flattop Box / Shenandoah Breakdown, Am I Losing You, Gypsy Dream, How I Long To Be In The Mountains, Ridin' The Blueridge, South Train To Memphis, I Saw The Light, Another Time

Bull's-Eye

Transcribed by Brad Davis **Written by Bull Harmon**

Reviews

CD Reviews

Billy Ray Lathum Presents
The Kentucky Colonels
Live In Stereo
Double Barrel Records 1001

by Joel Stein

Like Jimi Hendrix before him, guitar legend Clarence White's discography has grown in the years since his death. In fact, there are now more Kentucky Colonels titles in print than at any time during White's all-too brief life. With the current ease of digital reproduction, fans of White's (and other artists) can look forward to a spate of both bootleg and authorized releases. Take for example the new release, Billy Ray Lathum Presents *The Kentucky Colonels Live In Stereo* recently released on a home grown label by Lathum, the Colonel's banjo player.

Tapes of various Kentucky Colonels performances have circulated among die-hard fans for years. According to Lathum, these are the only live stereo recordings of the band and represent a complete set of the band at the height of its prowess as a live unit. It should be pointed out that Etsuo Eito, perhaps the leading collector of White ephemera in the world, suggests that the song order differs from the original tapes and only contains the first of three sets. Regardless, what we have here is a fairly compelling view of the Kentucky Colonels in performance. While guitarists tend to focus on the Colonels as a vehicle solely for Clarence White, *Live In Stereo* gives a more complete picture of the band...corny humor, strong vocals, and solos spread between mandolin, banjo and yes, White's mind- boggling guitar.

As one would expect from early generation tapes and the wonders of digital remastering, the sonic quality on this set far exceeds anything available in the bootleg world or on the other live CDs currently available. Not only do we get to enjoy 20 new performances showcasing the Colonels at their peak, we're treated to ten songs currently unavailable on any other Colonels CD, and perhaps most important to readers of this magazine, some new blistering solos by White and some great examples of his back up guitar work.

The Colonels were a solid bluegrass unit, and clearly a masterful live act. That said, it's White's guitar work that defines the band legendary status. White's takes on "Shucking The Corn," "Alabama Jubilee," "Soldier's Joy," and "You Won't be Satisfied That Way" are welcome additions to the White cannon. The interplay between White's guitar and his brother Roland's mandolin, like their vocal harmonies, achieves an intimacy that most musicians can only aspire to. Listening to the White brothers trade off on "Alabama Jubilee" is akin to eavesdropping on a private conversation. The brothers punctuate each other's statements, taking off where the other has left off. White's guitar is more restrained and focused here than on the version of "Jubilee" found on *Livin' In The Past* where at a few points White seems to lose concentration (the end of his second solo and a few times during his last take).

While White's lead guitar playing demands attention, there are a number of solid examples of his prowess as a rhythm player on this CD. One of the great advantages to listening to this CD over the various tapes is that you can actually here White's bass runs on most of the cuts. Hearing Clarence provide a rhythmic pocket for Roland to solo over is a treat. Some of White's most interesting back up is on the loose to the point of seem busting "It Ain't Gonna Rain No More," where White punctuates the proceedings with a variety of fills and rhythmic stabs. "Johnson's Ole Gray Mule" features prototypical bluegrass guitar back up—solid and driving.

Recorded on January 15, 1965, *Live In Stereo* represents the band a few months before the arrival of Scotty Stoneman (to hear that lineup, check out *Livin' In The Past* or the out of print *Scotty Stoneman and the Kentucky Colonels*). Befitting a band that worked together for a number of years, they perform as a smooth unit. Like many live recordings, *Live In Stereo* provides a snapshot of a moment, flubs and all (the vocals on "Dark Hollow"), as opposed to the polished portrait of a studio project. *Live In Stereo*, while not an essential bluegrass recording, could certainly fit in any well-rounded collection. For fans of White and flatpicking, it's another important document of an incredible player who changed the way the instrument is played and left precious little in the way of recorded documentation.

Contest Favorites
Wayne Henderson &
Robin Kessinger
Flying Cloud CD-FC-010

Reviewed by Larry Robinson

The synergism that exists between these master guitarists is nothing short of delightful! Wayne Henderson is not your average fingerpicker. Robin Kessinger is an exceptional flatpicker. As you listen to Henderson, it's hard to imagine any fingerpicking technique that is so fast and clean. Wayne is also a well known luthier.

Concert Favorites could be subtitled "A Flatpicking Primer." Here are a dozen tunes that are standard fare for your guitar repertoire. "Leather Britches" starts off

the project, and you get a hint of what's in store for the listener: A trip through guitar heaven with two virtuosos along with some mandolin input from another master, Arnie Solomon. Doug Rorrer has the bass position under control.

"Mississippi Sawyer" is a highlight track on the project. I also like their rendition of "Sweet Georgia Brown." Lots of evergreens in this musical forest! "East Tennessee Blues,"—I love the seamless transitions from fingerpicking to flatpicking. Lots of interesting rhythm and lead techniques in all of these tracks. Fun CD to play along with!

Thanks to the folks at Flyin' Cloud Records for making this wonderful guitar experience available. *Contest Favorites* is going to take up long term residence in my CD player, as it should in yours. Highly recommended!

We can also get a better feel for the stylistic blending of Wayne Henderson's and Robin Kessinger guitar techniques when they perform with the "Master's Of The Steel String Guitar" tour this year.

Song List: Leather Britches, Little Rock Getaway, Ragtime Annie, Fisher's Hornpipe, Cherokee Shuffle, Mississippi Sawyer, Forked Deer, Sweet Georgia Brown, Turkey In The Straw, East Tennessee Blues, Temperance Reel, Flop Eared Mule.

Rice, Rice, Hillman & Pederson
self titled
Rounder 11661-0450-2

by Joel Stein

For those waiting to hear something new from the reigning master of the guitar, Tony Rice, the prayers are answered within seconds on the new release from Rice, Rice, Hillman & Pederson. With a name like a legal firm, this group has enough musical credentials to form a conglomerate. While Tony Rice doesn't offer vocals, brother Larry Rice's vocals are close enough in tone and timbre to Tony's to make a few heads turn. In addition both Hillman and Pederson add vocals.

It would be a mistake to think of this as a pure bluegrass project. Like their first release as a unit, *Out Of The Woodwork*, the music here is as close to country rock in feel as bluegrass. Like the Newgrass Revival, it's acoustic, with traditional instrumentation—guitar, mandolin, fiddle, dobro and bass—and a very contemporary, rock influenced feel and sense of harmony. Song titles range from originals from Larry Rice and Hillman, to covers of the Grateful Dead's "Friend Of The Devil" and Delaney & Bonnie's "Never Ending Song Of Love." The latter is a particularly interesting choice as it was recorded by Clarence White for his unreleased solo album and was featured in the last shows by the White Brothers and the New Kentucky Colonels (both of which featured Pederson). Given that Tony Rice currently owns White's guitar and is certainly his direct spiritual descendant, it's a treat to hear his take on that particular track. Rice kicks the tune off with a nifty run, laying back as the vocals come in. He then plays a virtually unending series of supporting lines, twisting and turning behind Pederson's vocal before bringing the song to a close with a brief solo run.

Joining in support on various songs are Ronnie and Rickie Simpkins and Fred Travers, among others. But it's Rice's guitar is that commands attention throughout the project. From the intro on the opening cut, Hillman's "Doesn't Mean That Much Anymore," to the closing cut, Flatt & Scruggs "I'll Be On That Good Road Some Day," Rice jabs and stabs with his guitar like a master boxer. It's refreshing to hear Rice in this context—his playing maintains his personal stamp while avoiding lapsing into cliche.

Rice, Rice, Hillman & Pederson will not get any hardcore Tony Rice fan to forget *Manzanita*, *Cold On The Shoulder* or any personal favorite Rice recording. That said, it is a treat to hear his playing here. Now, if only these guys could be convinced to take the show on the road and tour.

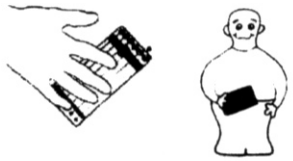
Dolly Parton
The Grass Is Blue
Sugar Hill CD 3900

Rhonda Vincent
Back Home Again
Rounder 11661-0460-2

by Joel Stein

It would be easy to dismiss Dolly Parton for her excessiveness—her self-deprecation and ease at playing a caricature are legendary. For example, when asked how she kept her waist so small, she answered that it was difficult to grow things in the shade. But it's impossible to ignore Parton's talent as a songwriter and singer—her "Jolene" is a brilliant piece of work.

Groove on the Move
Twanger PraxAx ™



Wearable Rhythm Hand Exerciser
Guitar & Bass Models around $35
www.twanger.com
toll free 888 944-2481

And it's equally impossible to ignore that same excessiveness that led Parton to assemble the finest band of supporting instrumentalists this side of Bela Fleck's Bluegrass Sessions. In fact, two thirds of Parton's band on *The Grass Is Blue* (Sam Bush on mandolin, Stuart Duncan on fiddle, Jerry Douglas on dobro and Bryan Sutton on guitar) served as the road band for Fleck's all star extravaganza. You can poke fun at Parton for any number of things, but not about her choice in musicians. Rounding out the band are Jim Mills on banjo, Barry Bales on bass and a variety of special guests (Alison Krauss, Dan Tyminski, Claire Lynch, Patty Loveless, Rhonda and Darrin Vincent, Alan O'Bryant and Keith Little) on harmony vocals.

In spite of this all-star cast, the question hovers as to whether this is a project of a Nash-Vegas star without major label support putting out a credibility project and paying for the best cast available (remember Bruce Willis' star packed foray in to blues and R & B some years ago?), or whether this project reflects an aspect of Parton as an artist.

It's clear upon listening that this project is an honest expression for Parton. She clearly has an affinity for both traditional and bluegrass music. Parton is confident enough as an artist to mix in some interesting covers (Billy Joel's "Travelin' Prayer" and Blackfoot's "Train, Train") with some standards ("Cash On The Barrelhead," "Sleep With One Eye Open," and Hazel Dickens' "A Few Old Memories") with four originals, a song by one of her sisters, and some well chosen mainstream country tunes.

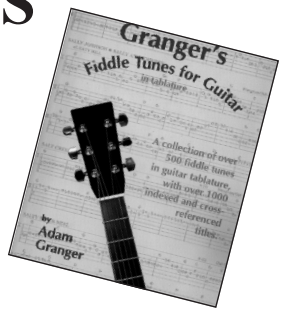
Any doubts about Parton's abilities should be erased by her take on "A Few Old Memories." Parton wrings emotion out of the plaintive lyrics, while the band offers mournful fills in three quarter time. Parton's offers a stunning take on the traditional "Silver Dagger." Her breathy vocal, almost frail, floats in over a banjo and chopping mandolin. By the second verse, the music builds with the band led by Douglas, then Duncan joining in. By the third verse, Parton and the band get in full stride. The song concludes with the musicians trading off with each other while Parton's subtely scats over the top then fades.

For all the instrumental talent assembled on *The Grass Is Blue*, this is a vocal project and the band never cuts the reins to ride. Still, the band's expertise here is in supporting Parton's vocals and offering concise statements. If this is a bluegrass equivalent of an all star line up, then kudos and a hometown welcome cheer for guitarist Bryan Sutton. Probably the least known among the contributors, Sutton is without a doubt one of the most exciting guitar players to emerge in recent years. His breaks, while frustratingly short and few, are well thought out and flawlessly executed.

Sutton returns, along with Jerry Douglas (it's hard to avoid hyperbole when discussing Douglas—he oozes musicality from his every pore) to support Rhonda Vincent on her return to bluegrass with the solid and aptly titled *Back Home Again*. Like Parton, who offers a supportive blurb on the CD jacket and features Vincent and her brother on her project, Vincent has worked the more mainstream side of country. Vincent also assembled an impressive cast—joining Sutton and Douglas are Vincent's brother Darrin (from Kentucky Thunder), Luke Bulla, and Glen Duncan among others.

Vincent, a gifted singer (and solid mandolin player), chooses her material well. "Little Angels" tackles the serious

GRANGER'S FIDDLE TUNES for GUITAR


Granger's
Fiddle Tunes for Guitar
in tablature
A collection of over 500 fiddle tunes in guitar tablature, with over 1000 indexed and cross-referenced titles
by Adam Granger

508 TUNES • 1027 TITLES • FULLY CROSS-REFERENCED • COMPANION CDs AND CASSETTES AVAILABLE

This is the largest collection of fiddle tunes in guitar tab in the world. You can learn a tune a week for ten years (by then, you'll have forgotten the first ones and you can start over!)

29.95 plus p & h

FINALLY!

COMPANION CDs

for Granger's Fiddle Tunes for Guitar

- Instantly access any tune!
- Set your CD player to "Repeat" and learn new tunes!
- Challenge yourself! Set your CD to "Shuffle" and try to play rhythm (or lead!) with whatever comes up.
- Not dangerous, illegal, discriminatory or fattening!

Our companion cassettes have been very popular. The five-tape set allows pickers to hear all 508 tunes in *Granger's Fiddle Tunes for Guitar*. While we will continue to offer them for folks who like the portability, or who don't own a CD player, the obvious drawback to cassettes is that it's hard to find a specific tune.

For years, folks have been asking us to make these recordings available in CD form. The advent of "CD burners" has made this possible, and we now offer these tunes on seven CDs. Each CD contains about 75 tunes, first announced, then played once, with rhythm on the left track and lead on the right.

SINGLE CDs/15.95 SET OF SEVEN/99.95

granger publications • box 270115 • vadnais heights, mn 55127

WE'VE GOT A NEW CATALOG. . . 1 • 800 • 575 • 4402 . . .CALL AND WE'LL SEND IT TO YOU

www.granger-music.com

issue of child abuse while avoiding the maudlin. Vincent deftly moves from first person to narrator as she tells the story of a girl living with the scars of abuse. It's a topic rarely taken on in bluegrass.

She offers a tip of the hat to Parton with a rousing take on "Jolene," and offers up a convincing take of "You're In My Heart" by Union Station's Ron Block. Vincent offers a showcase for her ample vocal range on the rousing "Passing Of The Train," where she pushes the song in the manner of a female Tim O'Brien.

As with *The Grass Is Blue*, one wishes that Sutton was given more room to strut his stuff. His playing throughout is a model of taste and support. One of Sutton's finest moments is "Jolene," where he punctuates Vincent's vocals with well timed runs. Sutton's work on the opening cut, "Lonesome Wind Blues" is quintessential bluegrass. His solo maintains the movement of the melody as it moves around the guitar. Sutton is a mature and fresh voice on the guitar.

It would be an honest wish to hear more hot picking from the musicians here. But that would be quibbling. Both bands avoid the hot licks in the service of the singers and the songs. Ultimately, that's what a good band should do and both records showcase musicians who support the lead masterfully. That's the mark of great players—who could possibly ask for more?

Richard Starkey and Mark Cosgrove
Delaware Crossing
NNM0045

Reviewed by Dan Miller

The long awaited release from this flatpicking super-duo is finally here. We featured Richard Starkey back in the May/June 1998 issue of this magazine and Rick provided the first cut of this album for use on our *Flatpicking '98* CD. Ever since that time flatpicking fans have been anxiously awaiting the release of this recording. Wait no more!

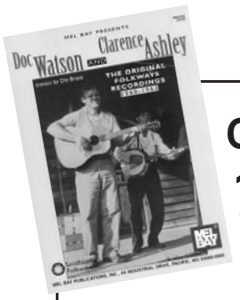
Was it worth the wait? I think so. As you would expect from a pairing of a national champion picker (Cosgrove) with the Martin Guitar Company's guitar clinician (Starkey), there is an abundance of great picking here. Being true flatpicking enthusiasts, Rick and Mark naturally explore the standard flatpicking repertoire with tunes like "Sweet Georgia Brown," "Huckleberry Hornpipe," "Down Yonder," "Little Rabbit," and "Roanoke." If you love to listen to, or jam on, these tunes, Rick and Mark will give you plenty of fresh and inventive solos to chew on. However, it is important to note that this is not just another flatpicking fiddle tune CD. For me the strength of this recording is its variety. They did a great job selecting their material.

Cosgrove and Starkey move out of the "hot picker" fiddle jam mode on numerous occasions here. First, they both sing. Cosgrove sings a great Jimmy Rodgers blues number, "Jimmy's Texas Blues," and later sings a folk-rock oriented Roger McGuinn tune "Just A Season." Starkey does a fantastic job adding his voice to the sultry "Summertime." On these tunes both players display their abilities to masterfully flatpick outside of bluegrass and fiddle music.

Another unique aspect of this CD is the use, by both Cosgrove and Starkey, of a guitar outfitted with a Parsons/Green acoustic string bender. While a number of the tunes are peppered with the bender's unique sound, it is most notably and expertly used on the slower numbers such as "The Kiss Me Waltz" and "Just a Season."

Two of the ten instrumental numbers on this project were written by Richard Starkey. The first, "Luke's Rainbow," was tabbed out in Volume 2, Number 4 of this magazine. This tune also appeared on the *Flatpicking '98* CD, however on *Delaware Crossing* a bass and mandolin chop has been added to the mix to bring out a fuller sound. The other Starkey original number, "Autumn Winds," is one of my favorite selections on the CD.

Great job guys! It was worth the wait. This CD is highly recommended!



Classic Doc Watson: 1960-1962

"The Original Folkways Recordings" - 48 of the most important and exciting songs in the traditional American repertoire as played by Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley. Transcribed by **Flatpk. Gtr.** columnist Dix Bruce with chords, melodies, lyrics, ***and solos*** in standard notation and tablature, plus Doc's phenomenal backup playing on many of the selections. "Way Down Town," "Banks of the Ohio," Handsome Molly," "Crawdad Song," "Fire on the Mountain," "Reuben's Train," "Sitting on Top of the World," 48 total. ***(E-mail us for complete list.)*** Study Doc's songs, technique, solos and backup guitar in depth. Included are Bruce's comments on all the songs, plus playing tips. **Book $19.95; Book and 2 CD set $43.95 plus $1.75 book rate; $3.40 priority.** ***(CA res. add sales tax)***

Learn FIDDLE TUNES!

By jamming with the band! **BackUP TRAX** book/CD set by Dix Bruce (from Mel Bay Pub.) lets you play along with the recording (each tune at both slow & regular speeds), read music/TAB, learn melodies and practice soloing on 14 popular **OLD TIME & FIDDLE TUNES** while the band (guitar, mandolin & bass) backs you up! You play all the leads. We'll jam all night long! Repeat a song as many times as you wish. Temperance Reel, Sally Goodin, Blackberry Blossom, Beaumont Rag, Red Haired Boy, Black Mtn Rag, June Apple, Arkansas Traveller, Soldier's Joy, Billy in the Lowground, Old Joe Clark, & more. (e-mail us for complete list)

Book/CD set - $17.95 plus $1.65 postage ($3.40 for priority mail).
(CA res. add sales tax) Please specify your instrument. Free Catalog on request!

Order Toll-Free: (877) 219-0441 • Visa / Master Card accepted

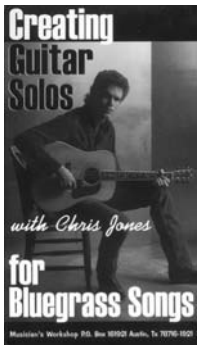
Also available: BackUp Trax: Swing & Jazz; Traditional Jazz; Early Jazz & Hot Tunes same price

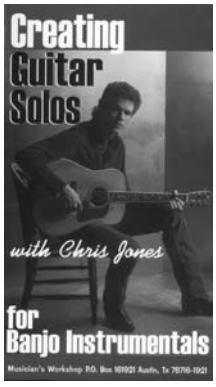
Camp Bluegrass 2000
July 23 - 28, 2000
13th Annual
South Plains College
Bluegrass Week
Guitar - Adam Granger,Jim Hurst
Mandolin - Steve Smith,Joe Carr
Banjo - Alan Munde,Gerald Jones,
Tony Trishka,Bill Evans
Bass - Missy Raines
Fiddle - Ed Marsh
Vocal - DeDe Wyland
Other Instructors TBA
New for 2000
Special Beginner's Classes

Western Swing Camp
July 30 - August 3, 2000
Bob Wills Style Fiddlin'
Western Swing Guitar
AHH-HAA!
Ed Marsh - Swing Fiddle
Joe Carr- Wills' Style Fiddle
Alan Munde- Swing Guitar
Contact: South Plains College
OFFICE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION
1401 COLLEGE AVE., LEVELLAND,TX 79336
(806)894-9611 #2341 EMAIL- JGRISBY@SPC.CC.TX.US
OR CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE
WWW.CAMPBLUEGRASS.COM
EMAIL - MARIE@CAMPBLUEGRASS.COM

Instructional Video Reviews

Creating Guitar Solos for Banjo Instruments
Creating Guitar Solos for Bluegrass Songs
by Chris Jones
Musician's Workshop





Reviewed by Bryan Kimsey

With these two videos, Chris Jones has answered the questions of a lot of flatpickers: "How do I play guitar breaks for banjo instrumentals and 'singing songs'?" There's so many notes in the former that it's sometimes hard to translate to guitar, and so few notes in the latter that it's sometimes tricky to play a "hot" break that still sounds like the song. Chris tackles these two subjects in separate, but similar videos that should definitely help beginning/intermediate flatpickers.

Both videos feature almost identical production, with some great additions to the video learning world. Chris plays the tune and then sets up a pattern of learning the melody first, followed by "connector licks" and "embellishments". A really neat feature is on-screen tab which shows you each of these three concepts in different colors. This makes it really easy to see just exactly how Chris is using connector licks and embellishments to add to, instead of replace, the melody. Another feature that every learning video should have, and which both of Chris' do, is screen titles for each song which make it easy to skip from section to section. There's the requisite split screen for showing right and left hands, although the camera sometimes doesn't zoom in on Chris' right hand. No matter- the left is shown and we're really more concerned with getting concepts rather than specific licks down. We're also taught various kickoffs which can be used in many other songs. And finally Chris touches on "safe" notes and how to sketch out melodies.

Chris is accompanied by his wife Sally Jones on rhythm guitar in both videos. On the vocal tape, he sings the songs and then tears them apart for us to show how he created the break he played. For the most part, his breaks are in first position, using simple songs, although towards the end of each tape he gets more complicated. I kind of wish that they would have used a banjo player on the banjo tunes video, so that we could hear the tunes as actually played on that instrument, but I think most flatpickers will be familiar enough with the tunes and if not, it's no big deal to listen to a banjoist on CD.

The banjo tapes covers the tunes Fireball Mail, Dear Old Dixie, Ruben, Cluck Old Hen, and Lonesome Road Blues, while the song video covers Shady Grove, Pig in a Pen, In the Pines, Bury Me Beneath The Willow, and Bridge to Portsmouth. Both videos are excellent and a recommended addition to your video learning library. Oh…be sure to watch the banjo video all the way to the end for some hilarious outtakes.

All CDs and Instructional items that are reviewed in this magazine are available through our *Flatpicking Mercantile* catalog.

Gear Reviews

Of Mice And Pickups
By Orrin Star

For the many acoustic guitarists who need to use them, pickups are a necessary evil—a pact with the amplificatory devil to wring feedback-free volume from an instrument that isn't very loud. I almost never use them myself and, in general, don't much like them; I'll take the sound of a good mic over that of a pickup any day.

So why am I now reviewing a new pickup from Switzerland? Well, several months ago I posted a note on Flatpick-L (the internet newsgroup) decrying the ugly pickup sounds of the guitars at a show I attended. Among the responses I received was one from the American distributor of a line of 'more natural' pickups made by a Swiss stand-up bassist/audio devotee named Schertler. Having just slagged pickups—and being something of an audio guy—how could I not take him up on his offer to audition an ostenisbly better mousetrap?

The Schertler DYN-G is a round, button-like affair a la the McIntyre and other contact transducers. Affixed to the top of the guitar with a thin ring of special green putty (included), it boasts a thin cable leading to a full size XLR (i.e. it behaves just like a regular low impedance mic cable, and goes straight into your mixer).

To evaluate the Schertler I headed over to my trusty local guitar repairman Bob Jones' shop and conducted a little 'shoot-out' between it, a McIntyre, the Martin Thinline that I have under the saddle of my '67 D-28 and the Sony mini mic that Bob has mounted inside his old Gibson. Using Schertler's own custom two-way powered speaker (which they sent along) as our PA, we began by listening to each pickup unadorned. The Thinline was unlistenable; the McIntyre was nasal and oinky; the Schertler was very fat and pleasing (if a little dark). So the Schertler distinguished itself in the out-of-the-box test.

But the situation changed once we added a preamp to the equation. Preamps are small, usually battery-powered boxes that boost the feeble pickup signal to a more robust level, adding considerable body to the sound as they go. A few years ago I discovered an innovative preamp-in-a-mic-cable called the SmartCord from Pendulum Audio. Running the Thinline and the McIntyre through it changed things considerably: the McIntyre blossomed, sounding fatter and much more musical. The Thinline was now listenable and also sounded pretty good—a little more bottom than the McIntyre but also a little more of that frappy treble sizzle (the #1 pickup problem). I couldn't run the Schertler through the Smart Cord. But I could run it through Schertler's own outboard preamp for comparison. Interestingly, the sound of the DYN-G was hardly affected by the preamp. On the one hand this is quite impressive (i.e. it doesn't require a preamp to sound good). On the other hand, the McIntyre/SmartCord combination had more air and life to it than did the Schertler. We then went on to listen to the mini-mic (which sounded very good) as well as the mini-mic combined with the Schertler (a very pleasing combo, with the brightness of the mic enhanced by some different low mids from the pickup).

All of the design/engineering/aesthetic elements of the Schertler and its related components are beautiful. But it is pricey, weighing in at a suggested retail of $470. While this may be somewhat offset by the fact that you don't need a preamp to power it, the reality is that you can have yourself many other preamp/pickup combinations for half that amount—and we preferred the sound of some of those combinations. In sum: a quality piece, but not a home run.

Having not given pickups a serious listen in a while, I was impressed at how actually listenable they can be. As already noted, simply adding a quality preamp to the chain helped alot. (And we didn't even mess with the two other processes which can also improve their sound: parametric eq and reverb.) Given the refinements that have occurred in pickups, preamps, mini-mics and other related gear there's no reason (save a dysfunctional PA operator) that an acoustic guitar should sound bad on stage today.

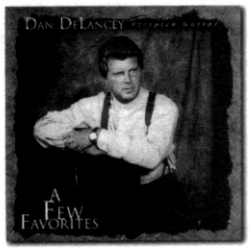
Schertler North America 508-778-4050
www.capecod.net/schertler

McIntyre Acoustic Pickups 704-662-3022

Pendulum Audio 908-665-9333
www.pendulumaudio.com

Doug & Rodney
Dillard
carry their instruments in insulated, weather-tight case covers from
Colorado Case
406 Garfield St., Fort Collins, CO 80524
(800) 340-0809 Fax (970) 221-5403
Sales@ColoradoCase
http://ColoradoCase.com
Free brochure, price list, and fabric samples

DAN DELANCEY
FLATPICK GUITAR



"Listening to him play, it is certainly evident that arrangement is something Dan does very well. His arrangements are interesting, exciting, tasteful and well performed."
—Dan Miller, Editor
Flatpicking Guitar Magazine

NEW CD RELEASE
A FEW FAVORITES

Liner Notes—
"A Few Favorites" by Dan DeLancey
"From the first note of "The Girl I left Behind Me" to the last lick in "Clarinet Polka" you can tell that Dan DeLancey is a powerhouse guitar player. His playing is up-lifting and soulful. The song selection is splendid! Dan is backed by a group of super musicians who know how to make a recording work. A nicely thought out project that will remain a favorite of mine as I know it will be of yours. The only down side—and it was hard to find one—is that the recording is over too soon for me. It only means that I'll have to hit re-play all day!! Enjoy *"A Few Favorites"* as I have.
—Steve Kaufman • *3 Time National Guitar Champion*

Titles include: The Girl I Left Behind Me, Redwing, Memories Waltz, Uncle Herman's Hornpipe, The Shelter Of Your Eyes, Golden Eagle Hornpipe, Pass Me Not, Farther Along,

To order your CD, please send $15 to:
DAN DELANCEY • 7911 HUNTER
RAYTOWN, MO. 64138 • 816-356-1879

Guitar Highlight:
Merrill C-28

Merrill Guitars
Recreating The Ultimate
Flatpicking Dreadnoughts
by David McCarty

Last issue, FGM examined a radically bold and innovative guitar design that paid absolutely no attention to the classic flattop American guitars of the 1930s. This issue, we turn 180 degrees and present an instrument intended to replicate to the "nth degree" every detail of the Martin dreadnoughts of the mid-1930s that many consider to be the finest flatpicking guitars ever made.

Merrill Guitars is a brand-new company with a 20-year history. The test guitar is a Merrill Cumberland 28 (C-28), a brand new instrument with the look, feel and sound of a 60-year-old guitar. Jim Merrill, the chief builder and designer, has taken his two decade-long love affair with vintage Martins and applied everything he's learned rebuilding, repairing and restoring these classic American guitars into his C-28 and a companion mahogany dreadnought, the Clinchfield 18 (C-18). Merrill Guitars also builds a modern steel-string design, a harp guitar, and world-class classical guitars, but this review focuses on their C-28 model.

The Williamsburg, Virginia-based company got its start late last year and intends to produce around 12 guitars a month with a production staff of three. All the work, Merrill stressed is hand-done; if C.F. Martin didn't use a CNC machine to carve guitar necks, bridges and braces at its historic North Street plant in Nazareth, Merrill isn't going to use one either, he says adamantly. Every effort is made by Merrill to create a guitar that is correct in design, construction and detail to the Martins of the legendary company's so-called "Golden Era."

The C-28 comes standard with a master grade Adirondack spruce top with Adirondack braces scalloped in the pre-war "high" x-bracing style. Merrill said in his inspection of dozens of Martin tops from the 1930s, he noticed that those braces were not as heavily scalloped as Martin guitars from the '40s, or most modern guitars with scalloped braces. Like the straight bracing on the renowned Kenny Smith model from Lucas Custom Instruments, this less radical scalloping contributes to a somewhat more even response and remarkably rich overall tone in the C-28.

The Merrill guitar uses historically correct trim, including ivoroid binding and a stunningly accurate celluloid pickguard in a dark tortoise color. No ugly "pepperoni" pickguard on this guitar. Merrill even insists on using genuine antique (not "fossilized") ivory for the nut, saddle, end pin and bridge pins. Great care is taken to shape the pins, nut, volute, and bridge exactly as they were on the '30s guitars, and the bridge pins are unslotted exactly like the originals. Merrill's passion for getting even the smallest details right extends to his choice of tuning machines. The C-28 uses actual Grover G-98 open back machines like the old Martins, not the Waverly replicas seen more commonly these days, and Merrill actually replaces the Phillips head screw that comes with the modern Grovers with a period-correct slotted screw.

"A friend of mine called me 'anal retentive' and I told him I didn't know what it meant, so I looked it up and it turns out he was right," Merrill says openly. "I've always been a stickler for getting the details right, down to the nth degree."

A couple of areas where the test guitar does deviate by choice from the Martin paradigm are the use of a modern adjustable truss rod instead of the steel T-bar employed by Martin at the time, and the use of old-growth Honduran rosewood instead of Brazilian. (Brazilian rosewood is available on a custom order basis.) Merrill says the old-growth Honduran rosewood is the closest cousin to Brazilian genetically, and in his opinion, comes closest to replicating the sound and appearance of a Brazilian rosewood guitar.

He offers his guitars with the vintage 1 3/4" nut width or a narrower 1 11/16" nut preferred by some players. Aesthetically, the test guitar missed one crucial element completely. The pre-war Style 28 Martin guitars used a very fine herringbone pattern purfling from Germany, but the test guitar came with the bigger herringbone pattern seen on most modern "herringbone" guitars.

Merrill says the larger material is all that was available when the guitar—a prototype, not a production instrument—was built. He's searching for a source for the correct material and will use it as soon as it's available. The slotted diamond fingerboard inlays also were surrounded by way too much filler on this guitar, but Merrill said that also was a problem only with this particular prototype.

Those minor issues aside, picking up the C-28, one is immediately struck by how well all these details add up to the correct sound and feel. The neck is V'ed, but is shaped so that the bound sides of the fingerboard are actually rounded slightly inward like the vintage necks were shaped. The neck immediately feels comfortable and broken-in, just like the best vintage guitars. The fretwork generally was excellent, although the test guitar did develop a significant fret buzz on the 1st string at the 10th fret—a minor problem that probably was caused by changes in humidity and temperature. When I mentioned the fret buzz problem to Jim Merrill's partner, Chuck Nimmo, Chuck said, "All Merrill Dreadnoughts incorporate a two-way truss rod system. This allows for simple adjustment of the action in order to compensate for temperature and humidity changes."

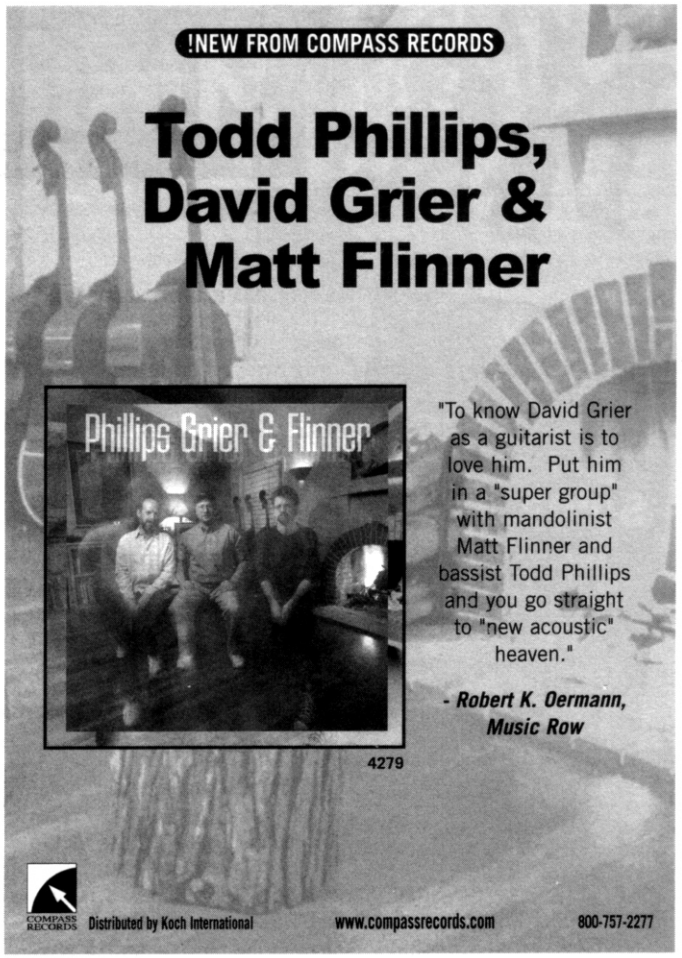
Not surprisingly, for a guitar that seeks to emulate every detail of an old Martin,

the C-28 displays the common tonal characteristics of the old herringbones. It's got a huge, fat bottom end that will drive sound engineers nuts trying to mic this guitar. There's no effort made here to create a more "modern" dreadnought sound as seen in the brighter, more mid-ranged voiced D-sized guitars from Collings, Santa Cruz and other contemporary builders.

Take a Merrill to your next big bluegrass jam session and watch the amazed reaction of the other musicians as you pound rhythms and punch out crisp, decisive G runs and leads that sound like the great bluegrass guitars of the past. The trebles are loud, clear and well-defined, and the guitar excels on flatpicking leads that can be heard over other instruments. The original Martin dreadnoughts were, of course, designed to be great rhythm guitars, and the Merrill C-28 simply nails that classic bluegrass rhythm sound. If you're truly looking for an authentic vintage Martin dreadnought sound, the Merrill comes about as close as you're going to get short of buying a $21,000 1938 D-28.

Jim Merrill and company have a clearly defined mission to give today's guitarists access to guitars with the look, feel and sound of the great dreadnoughts of the 1930s. If their production guitars live up to the exceptionally high standard set by this particular instrument, the Merrill Guitar Co. could make quite a splash. The price for the Merrill C-28 in Honduran rosewood is $3,500 including case. The C-18 model lists for $2,900.

For more information, contact Merrill Guitars, 140 B Tewning Rd., Williamsburg, VA 23185.


!NEW FROM COMPASS RECORDS
Todd Phillips, David Grier & Matt Flinner
Phillips Grier & Flinner
4279
"To know David Grier as a guitarist is to love him. Put him in a "super group" with mandolinist Matt Flinner and bassist Todd Phillips and you go straight to "new acoustic" heaven."
- Robert K. Oermann, Music Row
COMPASS RECORDS
Distributed by Koch International
www.compassrecords.com
800-757-2277

Common Ground on the Hill
2000
at Western Maryland College & the Carroll County Farm Museum
Westminster, Maryland
"Traditions"
Workshops, July 2-7
Jack Lawrence
American Music & Arts Festival
July 8-9
Guitar: Jack Lawrence, Harry Orlove, Dan Delancey, Scott Ainslie, Guy Davis
Resonator Guitar: Dave Giegerich, Dave Whitaker
Banjo: Bill Keith
Mandolin: Barry Mitterhoff
Fiddle: Earl White, Jay Ansill and much more!
Doc Watson- July 8th
Catalog/ Registration: Walt Michael - Director, Common Ground on the Hill, Western Maryland College, Westminster, MD 21157 410-857-2771
www.commongroundonthehill.com

New from Musician's Workshop

This course is exciting, easy, & educational all at the same time! 10 Gospel favorites in the "Carter Family Style". This is the technique of combining Chords & Melody by cleverly weaving the melody notes throughout the chord progression. Watch Dan as he takes you step-by-step thru each song, explaining every detail in an easy to understand & thorough lesson. Not only will you learn the 10 Gospel Favorites, but you'll gain the skills to put together your own solos after mastering the ones in this course!

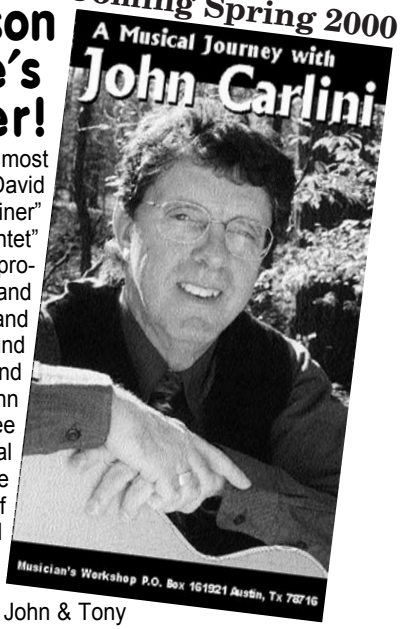
Fast, slow (with split-screen close-ups), phrase by phrase (with on-screen tab)

Will the Circle be Unbroken, Amazing Grace, Bury Me Beneath the Willow, When the Saints Go Marching In, Washed in the Blood of the Lamb, Where the Soul of Man Never Dies, Old Time Religion, House of Gold, What a Friend We Have in Jesus, Wayfaring Stranger

#6902 (video & tab book).....$29.95

Take a video lesson from Tony Rice's guitar teacher!

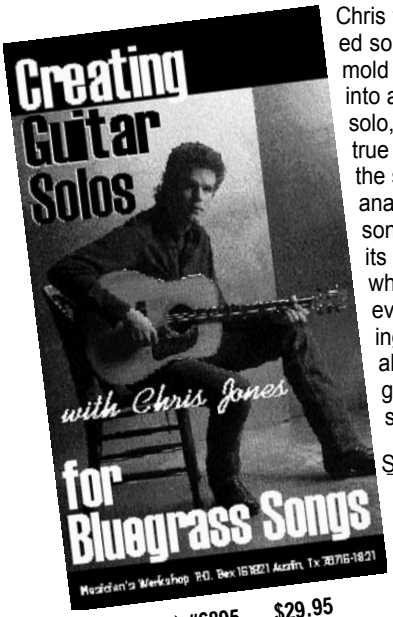
Coming Spring 2000



In Bluegrass circles, John is most famous for having been hired by David Grisman to be the "Personal Trainer" for the first "David Grisman Quintet" album. Why? John has been a professional Bluegrass, Jazz, and Classical guitarist for decades, and David wanted to create a new sound by adding elements of Jazz and Classical to his Bluegrass. John Carlini graduated from the Berklee School of Music, was the musical director for the "Ice Capades, the guitarist for the road company of "Grease", and has played Bluegrass with his friends: Tex Logan, Bill Keith, David Grisman, & Tony Rice for many years. Only John & Tony really know who teaches whom?

Includes: Time & Metronome, Coltrane/Monroe connection, Bach for acoustic guitar, the Mighty Tritone/the blues connection, key of the week, Technique

Video #6903.....$29.95



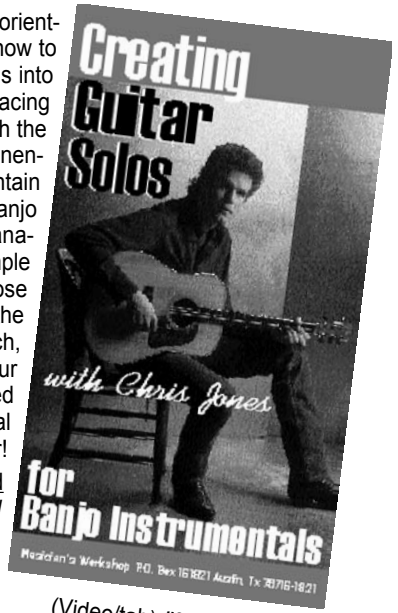
Chris takes you beyond "lick-oriented soloing by showing you how to mold a simple Bluegrass melody into a fancy, tasteful, driving guitar solo, a solo that is faithful to the true melody, while being "hot" at the same time. Watch Chris as he analyzes and teaches 5 example songs, breaking each down into its component parts, explaining why he chose what he played every step of the way. By learning this approach you will be able to invent your own intelligent, melodic solo for each song you encounter!

Songs taught & analyzed include: *Shady Grove, Pig in a Pen, In the Pines, Bury Me Beneath the Willow, Bridge to Portsmouth*

(Video/tab) **#6895.....$29.95**

Chris takes you beyond "lick oriented" soloing, showing you how to translate banjo instrumentals into guitar instrumentals, by replacing the fingerpicked banjo roll with the more linear "guitaristic" componentry, while being careful to maintain the integrity of the original banjo piece. Watch Chris as he analyzes and teaches 5 example songs, & explains why he chose what he played, every step of the way. By learning this approach, you will be able to invent your own intelligent, melody oriented solo for any banjo instrumental you encounter!

Tunes taught and analyzed include: *Fireball Mail, Dear Old Dixie, Ruben, Cluck Old Hen, & Lonesome Road Blues*



(Video/tab) **#6896.....$29.95**

Contact us for a FREE CATALOG! or check out our new web site!

Toll free: 800-543-6125
Phone: 512-452-8348
Fax: 512-327-6603
Visit our web site at: www.musicians-workshop.com
Email Us at: folks@musicians-workshop.com

Musician's Workshop P.O. Box 161921 Austin, Tx 78716-1921

CLASSIFIEDS

Classified ads will be accepted for guitar and musical related items @ 40¢ a word, 50¢ a word for bold lower case type, 60¢ a word for bold upper case type. Please call (800) 413-8296 to order, or send ad to High View Publications, P.O. Box 2160, Pulaski, VA 24301

Instructional Material:

VIRTUAL BAND BLUEGRASS METHOD.

For **Guitar, Dobro, Mandolin, Banjo, Bass** or **Fiddle.** Matching and progressive arrangements, theory, technique, backup, multiple tempos. **ATTENTION GUITAR PLAYERS:** In Volume 2, learn how to break away from first position, (a.k.a. Play any lead, in any key, anywhere on the neck, without a capo). **Book** and **play-along CD** $23.00 ppd. Specify instrument. Jay Buckey, 4017 N. Torrey Pines, Las Vegas, NV 89108 (702) 396-7824. Email: virtualband@juno.com. Web: <www.bluegrassworld.com/books/virtual>

GUITAR JAM: Play leads to "Blackberry Blossom," plus 11 other classics with our back-up band. A fun way to develop timing. Tape and TAB booklet $16.95 ppd.

Custom Practice Tapes now available! Choose from almost 400 songs and we'll play them slow and fast for twice the jamming. Andy Cushing, 6534 Gowanda

MUSIC THEORY COURSE FOR GUITAR

Correspondence Course. Certificate issued on completion. Beginning courses also available. Course outline and enrollment order form for this and other home study courses, write to: Jim Sutton Institute of Guitar, 23014 Quail Shute, Spring, TX 77389 E-mail: JSuttonISG@aol.com
Web Site: http://guitar-jimsuttoninst.com
800-621-7669

OVER 50 ESSENTIAL FLATPICK JAM TUNES

From waltzes to fiddle tunes to gospel. Send for free listing of tabs and cassettes to Harold Streeter, 4950 E 20th Ave, Post Falls, ID, 83954, USA 208-773-0645

TEXAS MUSIC AND VIDEO PRESENTS SUPERCHARGED FLAT-PICKING!

David Grier slows down Wheeling, Old Hotel Rag, Engagement Waltz, Bluegrass Itch, That's Just Perfect, Eye of the Hurricane, Impulsive, Shadowbrook, Smith's Chapel, Porkchops and Applesauce, and Lone Soldier - $29.95. Also videos from Joe Carr, "60 Hot Licks for Bluegrass Guitar" and "Bluegrass Flatpick Favorites," $29.95 each or both for $49.95. Advanced Concepts, PO Box 830, Levelland, TX 79336, 1-800-874-8384, Fax 806-894-2580, Web:

GUITAR LICK CARDS: from standard to stellar, 81 licks are isolated on playing cards. Line them up with the same chord progression as your favorite song and voila! It's a new arrangement! Rearrange the licks for endless variations. They're inspiring! Available for mandolin and banjo too. $11.50 ppd. per set. Andrew Cushing, 6534 Gowanda St. Rd., Hamburg

Easy Tab Write for our song list, and receive two free songs. Single note, melody only, easy to play. Old Town Melody Line, P.O. Box 104, Vero Beach, FL, 32961.

FREE CATALOG!
ENORMOUS SELECTION

Instructional guitar books and videos all styles. Also, Steven Crowell's 4 year college level jazz guitar cassette tape course. Write or call now! Chord Melody Productions, PO Box 4132, Dept. P, Annapolis, MD 21403 (410) 269-1022

WEBSITE:
WWW.CHORDMELODY.COM

MUSICIAN'S WORKSHOP
presents:
Understanding THE FORMULA OF MUSIC
Makes it so Easy!
with Dan Huckabee
Sit back & watch this video like a movie, and suddenly it all means something! Ah ha! Now the people that have been tapped directly into your wallet have a little less power over you. You understand how music works! (2-hour video) #3518...$39.95
How to Figure Out Music From Recordings
The most important thing in the world of music. This procedure is what made famous people "famous." It develops your ear, & allows you to learn what you want, when you want (2-hour video) #6337...$39.95
Perfecting BLUEGRASS GUITAR SOLOS
The definitive course on "How to Practice Efficiently". When you practice properly, you can learn more in less time. You will be applying these efficient principals to everything you learn for the rest of your life. Plus a "contest tune" with 4 variations! Remember, preparing for a competition is a great project! (Video/tab) #3569...$29.95
Learn guitar in 7 days!)
There are many beginning guitar videos, but this is the only one that truly realizes that a person can only concentrate on "one thing at a time". You will learn the most commonly used chords, fun familiar songs to try them out on, & how to make your guitar easy to play! (video/booklet) #6806...$29.95
Your First Guitar Lesson
With Dan Huckabee
800-543-6125
P.O. Box 16192 Austin, Texas 78716

CLASSIFIEDS continued

Guitars, Strings, and Accesories:

STEVE SWAN GUITARS stocks a wide variety of new and used Santa Cruz Tony Rice and Tony Rice Professional model guitars in various combinations or Indian or Brazilian Rosewood and Sitka, European, or Adirondack Spruce. I'll help you choose the right Tony Rice guitar from 14 currently in stock. write 1060 Solano Avenue #721, Albany, CA 94706, call (510) 527-1734, fax (650) 401-7306, email stevswan@sirius.com, website www.steveswanguitars.com visit our shop at 437 Colusa Avenue in Kensington, CA, just north or Berkeley.

SWAN 1935 FLATPICK D AND 1938 FLATPICK D are vintage recreations of classic 1930s D-18s made exclusively for Steve Swan Guitars. We have supplied the finest artist grade Adirondack Spruce tops and Brazilian Rosewood headstock overlays to make these guitars truly special.(510) 527-1734 stevswan@sirius.com www.steveswanguitars.com

DAN LASHBROOK
ACOUSTIC GUITAR SET UP
Fossil Ivory Bridge Pins, Nuts, and Saddles. Neck Re-sets, Fret Jobs, Crack Repairs. Specializing in helping you get the best performance out of your guitar. Occasional high performance gutiars for sale.
Call 828-252-1641

EUPHONON COMPANY STRINGS - First quality major manufacturer strings in bulk at fantastic savings. Same strings you buy in music stores, without the expensive packaging. Acoustic guitar sets extra-light, light, or medium: 80/20 bronze $25.00/dozen, $15.50/half dozen; phosphor bronze $26.50/dozen, $16.50/half dozen. All prices post paid. Twelve string, electric guitar, banjo, mandolin, dulcimer, special gauges available. Write for String Catalog. Euphonon also offers guitar repair and building supplies; Write for Luthier's Catalog, Euphonon Co. PO Box 100F, Orford, NH, 03777, 1-(888) 517-4678

Guitars New and Used. Authorized Dealer for Santa Cruz, Huss-Dalton, Stelling and Gibson. Also banjos, mandolins and fiddles. Discount prices. Call or write for current listing. The Bluegrass Connection, P.O Box 92, Birch River, WV, 26610. Phone: (304) 649-2012

BRAD DAVIS' BLUEBOOK of Speedpicking

MAXIMIZE YOUR FLATPICKING CONTROL AND SPEED WITH THE "THE BLUEBOOK" of Speedpicking

60 page speedpicking course for the flattop guitar, licks, songs, technique and instruction complete w/compact disc.

Send check or money order to:
bdm Publishing,
Box 890
Madison, TN. 37116

Only $24.99

Order by visa/mastercard
E-mail: bdmpublishing@home.com
615-262-5066
Visit our web sight: bdmpublishing.com

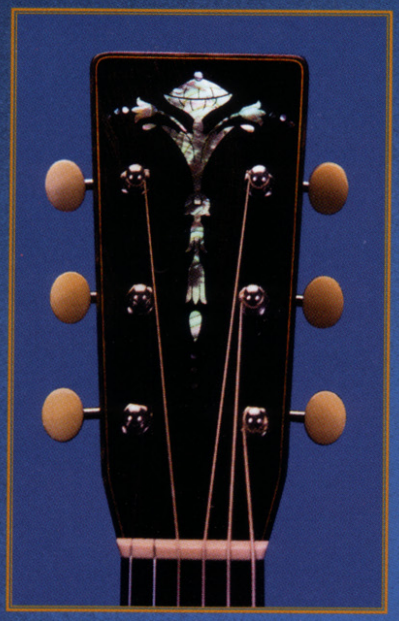
GUITAR FOR SALE
1938 Martin D-18
Serial Number 71143.
Forward Bracing. Good Condition.
$10,500
Phone 1-440-748-2126

PROFESSIONAL WEBSITE HOSTING, DEVELOPMENT & CONSULTING
For products, musicians and luthiers—web presence is no longer a luxury—it is a necessity! Contact us for information. Dennis Brooker - D. Brooker & Associates, Rt. 1, Box 12A, Derby, Iowa 50068 phone 515-533-2103 fax 515-533-2104 website http://www.dbrooker.com email dbrooker@dbrooker.com

GUITARS FOR SALE
Gallagher Guitars, stage and studio micorphones. For more information:
Call or email Gary Gordon,
ggordon@midwest.net, (618) 443-5051

BLUE RIDGE PICKING PARLOR
Old Bluegrass LPs, new and used CDs, books, videos, instruments, and accessories. Authorized Tacoma dealer. In stock: 1943 Martin D-18, 1939 Gibson L-10, Weissenborn copies.
email: blueridgepp@earthlink.net
Web: www.WMPUB.com/blueridge.html
20246 Saticoy St.
Canoga Park,
CA 91306
818-700-8288

"TOR-TIS" SHELL PICKGUARDS
Many patterns to choose from. Impecable workmanship. http://www.stringpull.com, click on inventory or (703) 978-5479 MC/Visa



photos by Tim Ostrander

"The Tone, Look, and Feel of my Prewar D-18."

—KENNY SMITH

KENNY SMITH MODEL

Lucas

Custom Instruments

More than a plain mahogany dreadnought. More volume with clear, balanced sound. Find out why more flatpickers are choosing the Kenny Smith model to meet their special needs.

Lucas Custom Instruments
P.O. Box 1404 Columbus, IN 47202
E-Mail: rwlucas@hsonline.net
WEBSITE: www.lucasguitars.com
(812) 342-3093

ALWAYS PLAY FIRST STRING.

Sound advice for living. And for choosing your guitar strings.

If you want to play your best, play with the best.

Martin® Strings won't improve your play, but they will improve the way you sound. Whether you're looking for a good everyday set, or performance quality brilliance, there's a set of Martin® Strings clearly in tune with your needs.

Martin® Strings

Outstanding tone and response for daily use and a demanding ear.

Martin® Marquis Strings

Hand-silked, premium quality, with exceptional brightness and clarity.

Martin® SP® Strings

Studio/Performance quality. The strongest, sweetest strings you can buy at any price.

Martin®: The only choice for strings.

C.F. Martin & Co. EST. 1833

P. O. Box 329, Nazareth, Pennsylvania 18064
800-633-2060
www.martinguitar.com

Martin SP and C. F. Martin & Design are registered trademarks of C. F. Martin & Co. Inc.
©1999 C. F. Martin & Co.